



Policies and Guidelines

V19.0

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Acknowledgment of country



Right Choice Family Day Care acknowledges the Traditional Owners of lands and waters throughout Australia and pay respect to Elders both past and present. We recognize the importance of continued connection to culture, country and community to the health and social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Service philosophy

Right Choice Family Day Care aims to deliver the highest quality of care for children and their families. We understand early childhood care plays a significant role in the development and learning of children, therefore, we endeavour to provide a 'homely', safe and nurturing environment for care to take place in.

Our scheme continuously strives for excellence in the care of each and every child, whilst addressing the needs of each unique child. It is important that each child is given the time and space to learn and discover the world around them. Children in our care will be given every opportunity to discover, learn and grow. Their interest and abilities will form the basis of their daily activities, thus their thinking and exploration further supported.

Right Choice Family Day Care encourages the support and growth of new educators. We will provide initial setup assistance and ongoing training and development. At our service we maintain an 'open door' policy, educators and families are welcome to contact us.

We will ensure to provide a safe and stimulating environment for children, families and educators. We are committed to embed child safety in our organisations in everyday thinking and practice. Our service has zero tolerance for child abuse. We are also committed to promote greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being. We respect and embrace all children, families, educators and staff from different religious and culturally diverse backgrounds.

Statement of commitment to child safety

“The Victorian Government is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. As part of the Victorian Government’s commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust report, which found that more must be done to prevent and respond to child abuse in our community, there is a new regulatory landscape surrounding child safety, underpinned by new Child Safe Standards.

The Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian early childhood services and schools, to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect.” Source: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/default.aspx>

The following statement affirms our services commitment to child safety by clearly stating Right Choice Family Day Care:

- will ensure the rights of each child is protected
- educators will adequately supervise all children under their care and ensure they are safe at all times
- educators will be aware of any safety issues or potential hazards and will work to minimise the risk to children and themselves
- has zero tolerance for child abuse. We will not expose any child under our care to situations where a child may be abused or neglected.
- educators actively work to listen to and empower children
- has systems to protect children from abuse (eg. regular visits while children are in care, speaking with families, keeping educators informed of the legal obligations and providing child protection training)
- will take all allegations and concerns very seriously and responds to them consistently in line with our policies
- is committed to promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Assessment, approval and reassessment of approved family day care venues and family day care residences

Assessing the educator

In order to approve an educator as part of the Right Choice Family Day Care team, there are several requirements that are required to be met. All new educators applying for a position within the company must have as a minimum:

- At least 18 years of age
- A current and valid working with children check (WWCC)
- A recent Police Check (within the last 6 months)
- At least a Certificate III in Children's Services or above
- Current Approved First Aid training (To check if any of your qualifications are approved go to: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Qualifications.aspx>)
- Current CPR
- Current Anaphylaxis training
- Current Asthma training
- Public Liability Insurance or willingness to obtain prior to commencement of care.
- A current and valid working with children check (WWCC) for anyone aged 18 years or over who lives in or regularly visits your home
- An understanding of children's development and how to care for them in a safe way that complies with all Right Choice Family Day Care policies and procedures.
- A willingness to learn new skills, attend training, to up-keep childrens' records and keep qualifications up to date and apply them to your business.
- A commitment to abide by the Children's services Act and Regulations.

Note: It is a requirement that all educators provide their PRODA RA number as part of their application process. All services are required to provide this number through our CCMS software for successful registration.

Assessing the family day care educator assistant

A family day care educator assistant has the same minimum requirements as an educator. It is a requirement of our policy that the assistant meets the minimum requirements before providing assistance to an educator. Note: The family day care assistant will need to be registered and provide required documentation to the service, before providing assistance to any educator.

The family day care assistant may aid:

- in the absence of the family day care educator, transporting a child between the family day care residence or approved family day care venue and the child's school, another education and care service or the child's home.
- while the educator is educating and caring for children as part of a family day care service.
- in the absence of the family day care educator, in emergency situations, including when the educator requires urgent medical care or treatment; and
- the absence of the family day care educator to attend an appointment (other than a regular appointment) as long as:
 - the absence of an educator is for less than 4 hours; and
 - the approved provider of the family day care service has approved that absence; and
 - notice of that absence has been given to the parents of the child

Assessing the venue

Coordination unit team members will conduct a "home safety check" which is a detailed checklist to assist them in determining if a venue is safe and adequate for Family Day Care use. The checklist prompts coordination unit staff members to check all areas of the home. Coordination unit members also have digital cameras available to them at all times should they wish to take images to discuss with management for clarification or any other reason.

Some areas we will look at are:

- the suitability of the residence (and areas within the residence) or venue according to the number, ages and abilities of children attending, or likely to attend, the service at the residence or venue
- the suitability of nappy change arrangements for children attending, or likely to attend, the service at the residence or venue, who wear nappies
- the existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pool at or near the residence or venue
- the risk posed by any animals at the residence or venue.
- any risk posed by glass doors and/or windows in the residence or venue.

Assessing an educator and family day care venue process

The process for the recruitment of an educator and their chosen venue (home) is as follows:

- A Prospective Educator Application Form will need to be filled out and either brought in to the office or faxed, mailed or emailed to the office, along with all relevant qualifications, police checks, working with children checks and all other required documentation.

- An interview will then be conducted between member(s) of the coordination unit with the potential educator. During the interview, questions will be asked in relation to childhood development, safety, regulations and more.
- If successful in the interview, an initial home safety check will be conducted. During this visit, a member(s) from the coordination unit will thoroughly check the house, including yards and resources available for use. A summary of items to be corrected or followed up on will be left on premises and adequate time will be given to the potential educator to correct these items.
- During the above correction period, the potential educator will need to come in to head office to undertake orientation with a member from the coordination unit (Orientation can also be undertaken at the potential educators home). During the orientation process the following will be explained in detail:
 - Role and responsibility
 - Administrative duties
 - Policies and procedures
 - Coordination unit duties
 - Mandatory requirements for educators
 - Educator support
 - Health and safety
 - Parent/ educator agreements
 - Service philosophy
 - Home visits and check lists
 - Important forms.
- Collection of all documentation needed is to be arranged prior to commencement. This documentation may include but are not limited to:
 - Child enrolment forms
 - Posters
 - Sign in books etc.
- An educator agreement form will need to be signed and the original must be sent back to the office.
- A second home safety check will be completed once the candidate has advised head office that they have corrected everything in the home that was required.
- Only if the second home safety check comes back with everything in order, and all documentation required has been received, is the candidate offered a position within the service.

NB: Children's enrolment forms must be completed entirely with proof of immunisations, and handed in to head office, PRIOR to the child commencing care.

Engagement or registration of family day care educators

Right Choice Family Day Care has a responsibility to engage educators and staff in a fair and equitable manner, based on merit and without bias.

Coordination unit staff will advertise and conduct regular educator recruitment and information sessions. We will use opportunities to advertise locally as well distant suburbs, and may have a presence at family orientated events held by councils and local communities.

Suitability of educators will be determined by their experience, genuine interest in the education and care field and their qualifications. All applications from prospective educators will be processed in line with our service policies "*Assessment, approval and reassessment of approved family day care venues and family day care residences*".

Keeping a register of family day care educators

For the purpose of complying with National Law a register of family day care educator will be kept and maintained at the service.

The following information will be recorded for each educator:

- the full name, address and date of birth of the educator
- the contact details of the educator
- the address of the residence where the educator will be providing education and care to children as part of the service
- the date that the educator was engaged by, or registered with the service
- the date that the educator ceased to be engaged by or registered with the service, this will be retained for a period of 3 years following that date
- the days and hours when the educator will usually be providing education and care to children as part of the service
- if the educator is an approved provider, the provider number and date of approval
- if the educator is a certified supervisor, the number of the supervisor certificate and the approval date
- evidence of any relevant qualifications held by the educator; or
- if applicable, evidence the educator is actively working towards a relevant qualification
- if currently working towards a qualification, proof of enrolment and/or documentary evidence that the educator has commenced the course, is making satisfactory progress towards the completion of the course

- evidence that the educator has completed current approved first aid training, current approved anaphylaxis training and current approved emergency asthma management training
- evidence of any other training.
- a Working with Children Check with a record of the identifying number (The WWC number will be checked against the Dept of Justice database for any updates)
- for each child the educator cares for, the name, date of birth and days and hours of care
- the names and dates of birth of everyone who normally resides at the residence
- the identifying number and if applicable expiry date of a current working with Children check , current criminal history check less than 6 months old when sighted or a current teacher registration and the date these were sighted.

Change of Law around 'Child swapping'

Child swapping is where a Family Day Care educator, or their partner, receives child care assistance for a session of Family Day Care provided to their child on the same day that they themselves provide Family Day Care.

An educator can **only** claim child care assistance payments when they or their partner are working as a Family Day Care educator if:

- Their child is in a type of education and care other than Family Day Care, e.g. long day care;
- Their situation qualifies as a specified circumstance.

Specified circumstances may be:

- Their child has been diagnosed with a particular disability or medical condition, or is in the process of diagnosis (and the service is receiving inclusion support funding for the child)
- The educator's child lives in a remote or very remote area
- The educator needs care because they have to work for at least two hours in another job (that is, not as an educator or for a Family Day Care service in another role on the care day); or
- The educator is enrolled in a programme or course of education and training towards a qualification at Certificate III level or above by a Registered Training Organisation, such as TAFE, and be engaged in activities for the purposes of the programme or course (e.g. attending the Registered Training Organisation) on the care day.

Educators must:

- Provide their Centrelink customer reference number (CRN) if they have one
- Be aware that they can no longer claim benefits for their children who are in Family Day Care on the same day that they provide care unless specified circumstances apply.

Families can assist by informing the service:

- When specified circumstances apply, provide relevant information and documents to the service.
- If anyone in their family is or becomes a Family Day Care educator.
- Tell their Family Day Care service if their specified circumstances change.

Monitoring, support and supervision of family day care educators, including how the service will manage educators in remote locations.

Monitoring educators

Right Choice Family Day Care will monitor, support and supervise family day care educators and educator assistants in complying with the National Law, National Regulations, National Standards and service policies.

All educators working for this service will be monitored on a regular basis, primarily by field officers. On occasion, the director or coordinator may also conduct monitoring visits. A home safety check/visit will be conducted every 4-8 weeks to help ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in care. Each field officer will have a list of educators that they are required to visit, but a regular change of educators is to be expected. Visits are to be conducted in 2 manners; Spot checks and arranged visits. Spot checks are visits that take place without notification given to the educator. Arranged visits are when the field officer and educator make an appointment time for the visit to take place. A combination of both methods may be utilised. The coordinator will also conduct spot checks on the educators and may, on occasion accompany a field officer on their visit. Educators are welcome to request a visit from the field officer at any time should assistance be required. Coordination unit staff reserve the right to request additional visits to an educator if necessary. A record will be kept by the coordination unit of each visit made to an educator.

Supporting educators

Support will be offered to educators via varied means. Support may be delivered via phone, email and through home visits. Our service will provide educators a copy of the service policies and other relevant regulations and law. As well as this, educators will be provided documentation to use in support of running their family day care business.

The delivery of support may with regards to curriculum planning, observation/record keeping and other relevant documentation housekeeping.

During visits coordination unit staff will:

- be professional and respectful towards all educators
- provide support to educators as required or upon request
- discuss children's development and assist in the documentation of the child progress
- discuss and assist the educator with their program planning

Supervision of educators

Supervision of family day care educators and educator assistants will be conducted by a schedule of visits (announced, unannounced and planned reviews, to ensure ongoing compliance). Our service may use electronic communications and technology including Skype and/or other, video conferencing means, as well as email to communicate with remote educators. Regular visits should still be conducted to educators in remote locations.

Assessment of family day care educators, family day care educator assistants and persons residing at family day care residences

Assessing the family day care educator

In order to approve an educator as part of the Right Choice Family Day Care team, there are several requirements that are required to be met. All new educators applying for a position within the company must have as a minimum;

- A current and valid working with children check (WWC)
- A recent Police Check (within the last 6 months)
- Undertaking or completed certificate III in Children's Services or above
- Current approved First Aid training
- Current CPR
- Current Anaphylaxis training
- Current Asthma training
- Public Liability Insurance or willingness to obtain prior to commencement of care.
- A current and valid working with children check (WWCC) for anyone aged 18 years or over who lives in or regularly visits your home
- An understanding of children's development and how to care for them in a safe way that complies with all Right Choice Family Day Care policies and procedures.
- A willingness to learn new skills, attend training, to up-keep childrens' records and keep qualifications up to date and apply them to their business.
- A commitment to abide by the Children's services Act and Regulations.

Assessing the family day care educator assistant

A family day care educator assistant does not need to complete or be working towards a children services qualification, but must have a current and valid WWC and all First Aid training in place. It is a requirement of our policy that the assistant meets the minimum requirements before providing assistance to an educator. excu

National regulation states that educator assistants may be used:

- when the absence of an educator is for less than 4 hours; and
- when the approved provider of the family day care service has approved that absence; and
- when notice of that absence has been given to the parents of the child;

See 'The engagement or registration of family day care educator assistant' for more information

Persons residing at family day care residence

Right Choice Family Day Care will take reasonable steps to ensure that any persons over the age of 18 years residing at the home of an educator is fit and proper to be in the company of children.

The following will be carried out to ensure that Right Choice Family Day Care is closely monitoring persons over the age of 18, within educators homes;

- All educators are required to complete a section in their prospective educator application form stating those who currently reside in the same residence, or are regular visitors that are over the age of 18. In the event that there is no person other than the educator within the residence, no names will be listed in this section. The prospective educator application form will be signed by the educator.
- All educators provide a list of their children and their ages in the prospective educator application form, so that head office is able to monitor children's ages and when they will turn 18.
- During visits, coordination unit team members will physically look for other persons within the household and ask the educator about them, should any be noticed.
- During visits, field officers will ask educators if there has been any changes to their current status of over 18 year olds within the household.
- During training / events / contact with educators, reminders may be made so that the information is always fresh.
- Regular file audits are completed where educators may be contacted and asked to confirm the status of over 18 year olds within their residence.

Assessing over 18 year old persons residing at family day care residence

Each person residing at family day care residence 18 years and over will need to provide the following:

- A current working with children card

If a person residing in a family day care residence has recently turned 18 years of age, they are taken to hold the card until their application has been determined.

Once a copy of the card has been received by the office it will be checked by official means via the Department of justice register for confirmation.

Visitors to family day care residences and venues while education and care is being provided to children as part of a family day care service.

Educators will ensure a record is kept which records all visitors to a family day care residence during when children are being cared for. An educator must not leave a child being cared for by the educator at a family day care residence alone with a visitor. The educator or educators' assistant should ensure a visitor remains in their company, or the company of an adult family member who lives at the residence, at all times during the visit.

The visitors record must include the following information:

- Date
- Name
- Phone number and Address (Company name if applicable)
- Reason for visiting
- Time in/out
- Signature of visitor

Written records are to be kept for 3 years after the record was made.

The provision of information, assistance and training to family day care educators.

Right Choice Family Day Care will provide current information, ongoing assistance, access to and opportunities for training.

Our family day care service will support educators by:

- Providing access to orientation training to every family day care educator and educator assistant
- Providing access to initial and ongoing training (home visits are considered training) opportunities for family day care educators and educator assistants.

- Providing information and support to family day care educators and assistants to incorporate planning and programming to reflect the service philosophy.
- Ensuring educators and educator assistants will have access to sufficient training and support to implement the *Early Years Learning Framework* and *My Time, Our Place Framework for School Aged Children*.
- Designating in writing a suitably qualified and experienced person as Educational Leader to guide curriculum development and to ensure children achieve the outcomes of the approved learning frameworks.
- Ensuring educators and educator assistants have access to information regarding their responsibilities and requirements under the National Quality Framework.
- Maintaining a record of training and support provided to educators and educator assistants.
- Ensuring family day care educators and educator assistants are informed and reminded to keep up to date essential training: for example: Anaphylaxis and Asthma Management.
- Endeavouring to provide information of training opportunities available in the local area.
- Providing educators and educator assistants with links to relevant curriculum documents and information websites.
- Providing educators and educator assistants with electronic or paper copies of all service policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that educators and educator assistants have been provided with information about and support to develop processes for the effective maintenance, disposal and storage/display of records such as:
 - Insurance documents
 - Accident records
 - Medication records
 - Attendance records
 - Emergency evacuation plan
 - Visitors record/register
 - Infectious disease exclusion poster
 - Curriculum planning records
 - Observation/Learning story records
- Actively seeking feedback from educators and educator assistants regarding the level and quality of information, assistance and training provided.
- Actively seeking feedback and input from educators, educator assistants and parents in the development and review of service policies and procedures.

The family day care educator must be willing to undertake initial orientation and subsequent training to become up to speed with all facets of adequately running and managing a family day care business.

The engagement or registration of family day care educator assistants.

A family day care educator assistant is a person who is registered with Right Choice Family Day Care, who can assist the primary educator in providing care for children. An educator assistant may be used when an educator is absent as per *regulation 144 (c) of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.

An approved family day care educator assistant may assist the family day care educator:

- in the absence of the family day care educator, transporting a child between the family day care residence or approved family day care venue and
 - a school; or
 - another education and care service or children's service; or
 - the child's home; and
- providing education and care to a child, in the absence of the family day care educator, in emergency situations, including when the educator requires urgent medical care or treatment;
- providing education and care to a child, in the absence of the family day care educator to attend an appointment (other than a regular appointment), if:
 - the absence is for less than 4 hours; and
 - the approved provider of the family day care service has approved that absence; and
 - notice of that absence has been given to the parents of the child; and
- providing assistance to the educator while the educator is educating and caring for children as part of a family day care service.

Our service will not approve the use of an educator assistant unless the family day care educator provides the written consent of a parent for each child being educated and cared for by the educator to use the assistant in the circumstances as set out above.

An educator assistant cannot be used for:

- non-emergency absences of an educator
- when parents do not provide consent
- when the service denies consent

An educator assistant must fulfil the following requirements:

- be over the age of 18 years

- provide full details on record (Full name, age, date of birth, address etc)
- have a current working with children card
- hold a current approved first aid qualification (Including CPR)
- a recent clear police check
- undertaken current approved anaphylaxis management training
- undertaken current approved emergency asthma management training

Educational program

Research determines that high quality educational programs significantly influence children's development in all areas. We have the opportunity to provide a supportive learning environment and program, gaining inspiration from the children and families. Thoughtfully planned experiences and environments encourage the children to feel a sense of control over their actions, be curious and investigate, and explore their understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them.

Purpose

Our Family Day Care Service aims to enhance children's learning and development through the pedagogical practices of educators and families in a positive learning environment, which is promoted across the five learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (V2.0) and My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia (MTOF) (V2.0).

Educators will gather and interpret information about children as individuals to inform the preparation of the environment and implement experiences that are engaging and meaningful, supporting children's holistic development. We support the vision of the EYLF, V2.0 to ensure '*all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life.*'

Under the National Law and National Regulations, approved Family Day Care Services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. The program should focus on addressing the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, while considering the individual differences of each child.

There are two nationally approved learning frameworks in Australia which outline practices that support and promote children's learning:

- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022
- My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia.V2.0, 2022

Our service is committed to the approved learning frameworks EYLF & MTOP v2.0

The approved learning frameworks include principles, practices and learning outcomes that guide educational leaders and educators in their curriculum decision making, and assist them in planning, delivering and evaluating quality programs in early childhood settings.

In compliance with the EYLF, MTOP (V2.0) and Education and Care Services National Regulations, the program will contribute to the following outcomes for each child:

Children have a strong sense of identity

Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Children have strong sense of wellbeing

Children are confident and involved learners

Children are effective communicators

THE APPROVED PROVIDER / NOMINATED SUPERVISOR / COORDINATOR /
EDUCATIONAL LEADER WILL:

- ensure that a high-quality program based on an approved learning framework is delivered to all children in accordance with the framework (outcomes, practices and principles)
- ensure the program is evidence based, age-appropriate and supports and extends the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child
- ensure the program contributes to the five learning outcomes for each child
- ensure planning for learning is a continuous cycle that involves-observation, planning, implementation, critical reflection, assessment, evaluation and critical reflection
- work in partnership with children and families, communities, teachers in schools and other professionals to inform educational practices that are place-based and relevant to that community
- ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded in the program
- ensure educators are intentional in all aspects of their professional practice
- ensure all children have the access to a quality and inclusive educational program that celebrates and makes visible children's diversity (EYLF, V2.0)
- ensure adaptations/adjustments are made in the environment for children with disability and additional needs. The approved provider will assist with making appropriate, professional referrals where necessary with family permission.

- gather information from families upon enrolment regarding the child's needs, interest and family backgrounds
- ensure the educational program is displayed in a place that is accessible to parents and families (reg. 75)
- ensure information regarding the content and operation of the education program is provided to families if requested (Reg. 76)
- provide information regarding the child's participation within the program when requested by families (Reg. 76)
- ensure a copy of the program is available at all times (Reg. 75)
- ensure documentation relating to child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the education program are recorded (Reg. 74), including:
 - assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the education program
 - assessments of the child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program

FDC EDUCATORS WILL:

- collaborate with the educational leader for curriculum direction and guidance
- collaborate with children to influence the development of the program in response to their own strengths, ideas, abilities and interests
- act deliberately, thoughtfully and purposefully to support children's learning through play-based learning
- display cultural responsiveness by learning about multiple perspectives and diversity such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, family and individual's diversity
- implement an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting, responding to and supporting children's learning which will underpin the educational program and involve educators in critically thinking about what is achievable and why
- use multiple sources of information to gather and document different aspects of children's learning, development and wellbeing
- take responsibility to be culturally responsive and be respectful of everyone's backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledges, lifestyles and social behaviour
- provide experiences that include both structured and unstructured learning times catering for children's individual needs and interests and, are age appropriate
- encourage children to act intentionally and with agency in play as they make decisions
- ensure materials and equipment reflect the cultural diversity and family values that exists in our society
- intentionally promote learning about a child's culture, country and community through dance, music, language and dialect, stories, art and craft

- respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning
- provide experiences that actively promote and initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising
- provide experiences that support and develop all developmental areas and curriculum areas including music, maths, and science
- ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued with equitable access to resources and opportunities to demonstrate their learning
- use a variety of methods to assist reflection on children's experiences, thinking, and learning
- ensure critical reflection clearly exams all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives, identifying children's learning, spontaneous play, teaching strategies, and changes that may be needed in the environment
- assist children to develop daily habits, understanding, and skills that support health and wellbeing.

Use of technology in care

Digital technologies and computers have become an integral part of many children's daily lives. For this reason, it is important that our family day care educators are not only familiar with the use of digital technologies, but are able to guide children's understanding of, and ability to interact, engage, access and use a range of digital technology in a child safe environment. Technology and media items will only be used as an extension to the daily program assisting in the development of social, physical, emotional, cognitive, language, and creative potential of each child. Digital technologies can be helpful in the retelling of stories about our culture, help to celebrate diversity and assist in providing an inclusive and equitable educational program.

Our Family Day Care Service will guide educators to implement responsible behaviour and limit screen time when using technology, respecting the children, and the privacy of families and educators. Educators will exercise appropriate judgement and behave in a professional and ethical manner when using technology. At all times, educators will provide a child safe environment and supervise children when using technology to minimise the opportunity for abuse or other harm to occur.

IMPLEMENTATION

Technology when used appropriately, can be a tool for learning, especially when educators play an active role. The Internet is a magnificent resource for research, communication, and extending programming ideas and interests. Computer use within our Service aims to encourage children to solve problems and use logical reasoning, leading children to make decisions and choices and assisting them to use computer software competently and safely. Educators are diligent in ensuring children are only able to access age-appropriate technology on any device provided at the service.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

App: An abbreviation of the term 'Application'- refers to small programs that can be downloaded or installed on mobile phones

Coding: Process of creating and inputting messages that can be understood by others or a digital device such as a computer robotic toy or app

Digital data: Information that is transmitted digitally, including (but not limited to) text, audio, images and video

Digital technology: Enables large amounts of data to be stored and shared so it can be accessed, created and used by people anywhere and at any time

Digital documentation: Recording and analysing children's engagement and learning using digital tools. (Includes photos, text and video and may be communicated via an online program).

Interactive whiteboard: A digital screen that projects content for groups of children to view or co-view or co-engage. Incorporates touch sensitive or responsive controls so the user may engage via the screen rather than a mouse or keyboard

EXAMPLES OF TECHNOLOGY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION MAY INCLUDE:

- touchscreen devices- tablets (iPads)
- programs that develop literacy or numeracy skills with ICT such as word processing, desktop publishing
- internet and information literacy skills
- Robotic toys- such as bee bots
- scanners
- Interactive whiteboards/data projectors

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR OF THE FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE WILL:

- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- promote and support a child safe environment
- embed the National Child Safe Principles into the organisational structure and operations
- ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students are aware of current child protection law, National Child Safe Standards and their obligation to protect children from harm
- record WWCC/vulnerable people checks of volunteers and students
- provide professional learning to educators in response to the ECA- *Statement on young children and digital technology*
- provide professional development, information to educators related to the [e-Safety Commissioner- Early Years Program](#)
- provide regular training for all FDC educators on reporting obligations (including mandatory reporting) and child safe practices.
- report any breach of child protection legislation to relevant authorities- police, DHHS Child protection, regulatory authority through NQA ITS portal.
- identify technology training needs of FDC educators and staff for provide professional development
- ensure risk assessments of FDC residence and/or venue reflect on the physical environment to ensure it supports child safe practices
 - consider the location of digital technology/equipment to ensure FDC educators can supervise children when children are using digital technologies
 - ensure all devices used in a FDC residence or venue are set up safety- with controls, filters and safe search settings
 - ensure all devices are password protected with access for FDC educator/educator assistant only
- ensure the *Service Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* is adhered to at all times by educators, educator assistants, families, visitors, volunteers and students
- ensure there is no unauthorised access to the FDC Service's technology facilities (programs, software program etc.)
- ensure all FDC educators and educator assistants have appropriate login details to provide secure usage
- ensure all technological devices have current virus protection software installed
- develop guidelines about how technology will be used by FDC educators in the residence/venue
- provide information to parents about technology use within the FDC Service
- seek permission from families to use digital documentation including photographs of children via social media and/or other forms of documentation platforms

- ensure children, educators and parents are aware of our service's complaints handling process to raise any concerns they may have about the use of digital technologies or any other matter (see: *Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- discuss with educators terms regarding sharing personal data online; ensure children's personal information where children can be identified such as name, address, age, date of birth etc is not shared online

FAMILIES DAY CARE EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- comply with current legislation and service policies
- keep passwords confidential
- model appropriate use of digital devices and online services for learning purposes
- identify and minimise risks to children in physical and online environments
- only permit children to use devices in open areas of the service to ensure close monitoring and supervision
- log out of computer and software programs after each use
- only access and modify files and data for which they have authorisation
- not harass, slander, intimidate, embarrass, defame, or seek to offend another person, group of people, or organisation via technological devices
- not make copies of, transmit, steal, or loan copies of service documents to other persons
- ask permission before taking photos of children on any device so children begin an understanding of how photos of them can be used and where they will be published
- ensure they are aware of their mandatory reporting requirements and respond and report any concerns related to child safety including inappropriate use of digital technology to the Approved provider or nominated supervisor
- ensure privacy levels are set on electronic devices when in use by young children
- participate in professional development opportunities about online safety and digital technology
- ensure children's personal information where children can be identified such as name, address, age, date of birth etc is not shared online

IN RELATION TO CHILDREN, EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- support children's natural curiosity for technology
- provide children with access to age-appropriate technologies to help develop their computer literacy skills
- introduce concepts to children about online safety at age-appropriate levels

- only provide programs or apps that they have viewed and assessed prior to introducing to children
- build on children's learning and inspire the ongoing and enthusiastic acquisition of knowledge through technology
- use technology to build on current projects and document children's learning
- limit the amount of time spent on screens as per recommended screen times
- support children in turn-taking and learning to share when using digital technologies in collaboration with others
- provide a child safe environment to children- reminding them if they encounter anything unexpected that makes them feel uncomfortable, scared or upset, they can seek support from the FDC educator or educator assistant
- teach children to 'ask before they tap' or do anything new on a device
- limit experiences involving screen use to those which have an educational component or include movement and gross motor activity
- discuss with children the role of screen time in their lives and support them in making appropriate choices about their use of screen time for both education and recreation
- model appropriate screen behaviours and self-regulation to the children
- encourage productive sedentary experiences for rest and relaxation that are not technology reliant
- ensure that an appropriate balance between inactive and active time is maintained each day.
- ensure that under no circumstances the screen is used as a reward or to manage challenging behaviours
- educate and support children to begin to develop skills to critically evaluate sources of information on the internet.

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF TECHNOLOGY WITHIN OUR FDC SERVICE

- implement risk management strategies to ensure children are always supervised when using any digital device
- use of digital technologies are used to promote social interactions between children, peers and adults
- programs must be carefully selected and be suitable to the needs and development levels of each child using or watching various types of technology or media
- programs and apps will be chosen to support and promote children's cognitive investment
- all online devices have appropriate filtering and monitoring in place with safe settings activated
- all devices are password protected with access for educator/educator assistant only

- postural awareness will be promoted when using devices
- technology is used to assist in expanding the content of the daily program and appropriate current affairs (e.g., the Olympic Games, environmental resources).
- technology is predominantly used where play-based and 'hands-on' experiences cannot provide the same information (e.g., investigating planets or dinosaurs). It will not replace appropriate experiences nor professional pedagogy.
- programs are chosen that are engaging and age appropriate to children: Only 'G' rated television programs and movies will be viewed at the FDC residence or venue
- the use of TV and watching DVD's will be kept to a minimum. When used:
 - programs depicting violence and/or inappropriate content (including graphic news reports) will not be shown
 - TV programs or videos will only be shown that have positive messages about relationships, family and life
 - information about programs to be viewed will be shared with families beforehand to ensure that they approve of the content. This may include:
 - title
 - synopsis of program
 - rating
 - length of program
 - all content will be socially and culturally considerate and appropriate.
- timeframes for 'screen time' according to Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines are:
 - Children birth to one year should not spend any time in front of a screen.
 - Children 2 to 5 years of age should be limited to less than one hour per day.
 - Children 5-12 years of age should limit screen time for entertainment to no more than 2 hours a day.
- children will be taught responsible concepts of digital use
- only quality developmentally appropriate interactive media will be used.

IN RELATION TO FAMILIES OUR SERVICE AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- create shared understandings between families and educators about digital technology use, by adults, in front of children
- provide information regarding online safety to families [eSafetyparents](#)
- provide families with information about the digital technology used by the Service and FDC educator
- request written consent from parents/families to collect and share personal information, images or videos of their children online (Website, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp),

- provide information to parents and families about how to make a complaint and what to expect from our complaints handling processes (see: *Dealing with Complaints Policy*)
- provide information and advice to families about the selection of digital media content, apps and games that are appropriate for use by young children
- provide information about the apps and programs used by the FDC educator
- support families to understand that negative effects of exposure to disturbing or arousing content and screens before sleep time.

Pets and other animals

Our service acknowledges the importance of always keeping children safe. While pets and other animals can prove an effective inclusion into the child's experiences in learning environment, they are also a risk to children, so we ensure the children are always safe.

Approved provider will

- Monitor the compliance of the policy and help the educators to minimize the risk through risk minimisation strategies
- Inform educators and parents on the health and safety practices for pets and other animals

Educators will:

- Ensure a pet risk assessment is completed before acquiring a new animal
- Ensure to review the pet risk assessment once every 12 months.
- Ensure all animals and pets are always isolated from the children
- Birds should be in an inaccessible enclosure and other reptiles should be inaccessible in a locked enclosure
- Inform families of what animals are kept on the premises at the interview. Families are to be informed of what measures have been taken to keep the animals and pets inaccessible to children, and it should be documented on the parent/Educator agreement form
- Inform the approved provider and families immediately of any new animals on the premises
- Report to the approved provider and the family if any injuries caused by the animal/pet
- Report of any animals or pets that have shown any forms of aggression towards any stakeholders must be permanently isolated and inaccessible to children
- Ensure children are educated about correct handling techniques and acceptable behaviour when handling animal /pet

- Ensure the animals or pets are kept clean, well-cared for and in a healthy condition and do not have any diseases that can be transmitted to children
- Ensure animals or pets are vaccinated as required
- Animal or pet that are sick must be treated by a VET
- Any belongings of the pets or animals must be kept inaccessible to children
- In case of fish tank, ensure it is cleaned regularly, and covered with safety glass
- A risk assessment must be done to manage and to let children handle the pets/animals

Water safety

All swimming pools at the family day care educator's residence must comply with the Australian Standards and State regulations for pool fencing and gates. Also, remove any items or objects that could be used to climb into the fenced area of a pool, trough, or water storage unit e.g. chairs, bins, bikes, any overhanging trees.

The following should also be taken into account:

- No child will enter into the area of a spa, or a private or public swimming pool whilst in the family day care service is operating and children are in care.
- At all times whilst family day care is operating, the spa and/or swimming pool on the premises **will not** be used.
- All children near water will be closely supervised, and no child will be left alone near water.
- Any containers that holds or collects water, such as nappy buckets, ponds, spas must be **safely covered** or made **inaccessible** to children.
- Display a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) guide near any water and/or where water play is usually conducted.
- All children's play areas that contain water hazards such as dams, drains, creeks, lakes will be fenced off to make **inaccessible** to children.
- At all times children near water are closely supervised. A child will never be left unattended near any water, and **an educator must supervise** if children are using a paddling/wading pool.
- Wading pools and other containers must be immediately emptied and cleaned after use and stored to prevent collection of water.
- Children with diarrhoea, upset stomach, open sores or nasal infections **should not** use the paddling/wading pool.
- All children should wear appropriate bathers, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toileting hygiene practices while in the pool.
- Remove all children immediately, empty and disinfect the pool should a child pass a bowel motion whilst in the pool.

- ***Make sure no child swims in any water without:***
 - Written permission from family member to learn water safety and swimming.
 - Appropriate educators/child ratios in place.
 - Having sufficient numbers of educators present who have first aid or recognised water safety and rescue procedures.
 - **Children must be closely supervised during water play or water based activities, whether it is taking place inside or outside. As mentioned above, water play buckets/containers must be emptied immediately after use.**

Nutrition, Food and Beverage

This service has a responsibility to aid children attending the service to develop good food habits and attitudes. By working with families and all educators, we will also positively influence each child's health and good nutrition at home. We believe healthy food habits acquired at a young age will be beneficial in helping the child make good food choices later in life.

Some educators may not provide food as part of their service. However, educators who offer regular meals or occasional snacks will be required to display a menu for families to review.

Minimising risk

- The family day care educator will maintain health and hygiene practices. Undertaking an accredited Food Safety course is recommended. Assistance can be provided by the service to find a suitable course.
- Safe eating practices will be implemented to minimise risk of choking e.g. babies will be nursed when feeding from bottles until they are comfortable holding their own bottles.

In relation to the provision of food and beverages

- Ensure children have access to, and are encourage to access, safe drinking water at all times.
- Ensure children are offered foods and beverages throughout the day that are appropriate to their nutritional and specific dietary requirements based on written advice from families that is typically set-out in a child's Enrolment Form. We will choose foods based on the individual needs of children whether they are based on likes, dislikes, growth and developmental needs, cultural, religious or health requirements. Families will be reminded to update this information regularly or as necessary.
- Children who do not eat during routine meal times or children who are hungry will be provided with foods at periods other than meal times or snack times.

- Ensure food is consistent with information based on the Australian Government's - [Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood - Cooking for Children Book](#)
- Families will be encouraged to provide food using these guidelines above.
- Provide food that is hygienic
- Ensure foods and beverages have a reduced risk of choking.
- Families may be provided with daily information about their child's food and beverage intake and related experiences.
- Provide a weekly menu of food and beverages that are based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines to ensure the provision of food and beverages is nutritious and adequate in quantity (applicable only to educators who provide food for the children).
- The menu must be displayed in an accessible and prominent area for parents to view.
- The menu must accurately describe the food and beverages provided each day of the week.
- Present food attractively.
- Babies will be fed individually by educators.
- Age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture will be provided for each child.
- Specific information on **children's dietary requirements** can be found at: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/regulation/HealthyEatingNQS.pdf>

In relation to promoting healthy living and good nutrition

- Develop health and nutrition awareness and act to the best of our abilities on cross-cultural eating patterns and related food values.
- Make meal times relaxed and pleasant and timed to meet the needs of the children. Educators will engage children in a range of interesting experiences, conversations and routines.
- Discuss food and nutrition with the children.
- Not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe.
- Not allow the children to be force fed without being required to eat food they do not like or more than they want to eat.
- Encourage toddlers to be independent and develop social skills at meal times.
- Establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program.
- Talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating.

- Encourage parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes. This information will be provided upon enrolment and as new information becomes available.
- Encourage educators to present themselves as role models. This means maintaining good personal nutrition and eating with the children at meal times.
- Provide nutrition and food safety training opportunities for all staff including an awareness of other cultures food habits.

Use the following principles in preparing infants bottle feeds:

1. Store bottles of milk on a shelf in the refrigerator, do not store in the door of the refrigerator.
2. Use only clean bottles and teats for all infant feeds.
3. Wash hands before preparing or handling expressed milk or formula.
4. Prepare formula strictly according to instructions on the container.
5. Do not use a microwave for heating expressed breast milk and infant milk bottles.
6. Warm infant bottles by standing in warm/hot water.
7. Discard any unused infant milk left over after each feed or that has not been consumed by the infant after 30 minutes.
8. In choosing a method of heating babies bottled milk, utilise risk management principles to determine a method which will best minimise risks to both children and educators.
9. Infants must be held when feeding.

Use the following guidelines in relation to bottled breast milk:

1. Ensure bottled breast milk is always labelled with the child's name, mother's name and the date it was expressed.
2. Breast milk can be stored in the refrigerator for 48 hours and in a deep freezer for up to 3 months.
3. Frozen breast milk can be thawed by placing in either cool or warm water, don't put in boiling water as the milk will curdle, and shake the bottle if the fats and milk have separated.
4. Thaw under running water, start with cold water then increasingly warm water and test the temperature of the milk on your wrist before giving it to the baby.
5. Throw away any unused breast milk, do not refrigerate or refreeze breast milk once it has been thawed or heated.

After use of bottles, rinse teats and bottles with water, wash in hot soapy water, rinse with water, and then air dry.

Food preparation and safety

The bacteria that commonly cause food poisoning grow rapidly between 5°C and 60°C; this is commonly referred to as the “temperature danger zone”.

Use the following guidelines to maintain food safety:

- All food for children brought from home will be immediately placed in the refrigerator provided in the service. Children’s food will be removed from insulated containers before placing in the refrigerator.
- Don’t leave perishable foods in the temperature danger zone for longer than 1 hour.
- Keep cold food in a fridge, freezer, below 5°C until you are ready to cook or serve, e.g. if you are serving salads keep them in the fridge until ready to serve.
- Keep hot food in an oven or on a stove, above 60°C until you are ready to serve.
- Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible, within 1 hour. If reheating leftovers, reheat to steaming hot.
- Never defrost foods on the bench top. Foods should be defrosted overnight in the fridge or in the microwave.
- Use a thermometer to make sure your fridge is below 5°C. Don’t overload refrigerators, as this reduces cooling efficiency.
- Store dry foods in sealed, air-tight containers.
- Any food removed from its original container must be stored in a container with the used by date of the food written on it. The ingredients must also be listed with the date it was opened.
- Ensure the food storage area is well cleaned, ventilated, dry, pest free and not in direct sunlight.
- Prevent pests by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and removing garbage/waste frequently.
- All foods are wrapped, covered, dated (used by date and date it entered the Service) and labelled.
- Store foods on shelves, never on the floor including play dough material.
- Store raw and cooked foods separately. **NEVER** store raw foods on top of cooked foods as juices may drip down and contaminate the cooked food.
- Store food once it has sufficiently cooled down. Foods cool quicker in smaller, shallow containers.
- Fridges and freezers need to be cleaned regularly and fridge door seals checked to be in good repair.
- The operating temperature of the fridge and freezer need to be checked regularly and a record kept of this.

Hygiene and food handling

Educators must take all reasonable measures not to handle food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food in a way that is likely to compromise the safety and suitability of food.

The following should be used as a guideline for safe food handling:

- Rotate stock each week.
- Ensure kitchen, sink, walls, cupboards are thoroughly clean at all times
- Clean fridge weekly.
- Clean oven monthly.
- Clean cupboard interiors bi-monthly or more frequently if necessary.
- Cover all food with cling wrap or foil when needed.
- Ensure all foods are stored in the correct manner.
- Maintain personal hygiene in food preparation.
- Wear disposable gloves or use tongs when handling food.

For further information please refer to:

Australian Breastfeeding Association at <http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au> (Information on breastfeeding.)

Food Safety Standards (Australia only) at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au> and provide comprehensive guidelines on food safety and management of a food business.

Sleep and Rest

At Right Choice FDC we believe effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in a childcare environment and sleep, rest and relaxation are central to a young child's wellbeing.

Children can vary considerably in their needs for sleep and rest. Educators are required to provide ample sleep and rest opportunities for all children in accordance with their varying health and developmental needs and to ensure their needs for sleep and relaxation are met.

Our educators will consult with families about their child's individual needs, ensuring all parties are aware of the different values, cultural, and parenting beliefs and practices, or opinions associated with sleep requirements.

There are no definitive settling practices for resting children. However, when considering settling procedures for resting children, it is important for educator to:

- meet the individual needs of children

- maintain health and safety practices
- minimise any distress or discomfort
- acknowledge children's emotions, feelings and fears

Sleep and resting practices for babies and toddlers

- Babies will be placed on their back to rest.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a child from being placed on their back, the alternative resting practice must be directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.
- If older babies turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position, but always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest.
- At no time will a baby's face be covered with bed linen.
- To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they will be placed with their feet closest to the bottom end of the cot.
- Quilts and duvets will not be used as bed linen. Pillows, soft toys, lamb's wool and cot bumpers are not recommended.
- Light bedding is the preferred option, which must be tucked in to prevent the baby from pulling bed linen over their head.
- Sleeping bags with a fitted neck and arm holes are an alternative option to bed linen and encourage a baby to rest on their back. Sleeping bags should not have a hood.
- Quiet experiences may be offered to those toddlers who do not fall asleep.

Safe sleep and resting practices for preschool children

- Preschool children will be placed on their back to rest. If they turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position but always ask them to lay on their back when first placing them to rest.
- At no time will a preschooler's face be covered with bed linen when they are sleeping.
- Light bedding is the preferred option.
- Quiet experiences may be offered to preschoolers who do not fall asleep.

Safe resting practices for school age children

- If a school age child requests a rest then there is a designated area for the child to be inactive and calm, away from the main group of children.
- The designated rest area may be a cushion, mat or seat in a quiet section of the care

environment.

- Quiet, solitary play experiences are available for those school age children who request the need for a rest or time away from their peers.
- Safe resting practices are relevant to school age children because, if they are resting or sleeping they should be monitored at regular intervals and a school aged child's face should be uncovered when they are sleeping.
- Light bedding is the preferred option.

Safe sleep and resting practices for a child who is unwell

Children who are unwell will be given the highest supervision priority and monitored constantly especially if the child has a high temperature, vomited or received minor trauma to their head. For example, a baby who is crawling topples over and bumps their head or a ten year old who receives a bump to the head while playing sport.

Supervision of sleeping and resting children

- All children who are resting will be supervised by family day care educator regularly.
- Students or volunteers will not be left unsupervised when settling children for a rest.
- All children who have fallen asleep in the care will be monitored regularly with specific attention to breathing patterns.
- Educator will physically present in the room or should always be within close proximity as to be able to hear and / or see if the child awakens.
- Educator must ensure physical checks of a sleeping child with a medical condition every 15 minutes.
- All children above 1 year old without any medical condition must be physically checked every 30 minutes.
- physically check that the infant/child from the side of the cot (or floor mattress/toddler bed) to include:
 - breathing- rise and fall of child's chest
 - skin and lip colour
 - head position
 - body temperature
 - airway
 - head and face- ensure they remain uncovered
- Children attending overnight care must be physically checked every 3-4 hours to ensure their safety. A baby monitor with sound and viewing ability is highly encouraged to ensure close supervision during overnight stay.

The following must be considered for children in overnight care:

- educator and service will take into consideration, how children will be monitored overnight.
 - educator and service will consider the sleeping location and environment, ensuring children feel comfortable to rest and have privacy.
 - risks and physical safety of the child's sleeping environment
 - access to other parts of the house during the night
 - the area children will use for sleep must be assessed by the service
 - re-assessment of residence will be completed annually
 - a specific room is provided for children to sleep in, no common areas eg. lounge room
 - children will have access to the family day care educator at all times
 - the educator holds responsibility and supervision of the child/ren at all times. Supervision must not be delegated to any other family member
 - a coordinator is to be available at all times when education and care is provided for children, including overnight care or care outside of core hours.
- CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors do not replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children
 - Educator and service will maintain up to date records of working with children checks for all adults in the residence.

Sleep and rest risk assessment

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators, will conduct a risk assessment to ensure potential hazards are identified and specify how any risks identified are managed and minimised in sleep and rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines (Reg. 84A).

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised during sleep or rest. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. If a risk concerning a child's safety during sleep and rest is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must review and update the *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Consideration of cots and mattresses

In keeping with sustainable practices, we acknowledge that some educators may opt to use pre-loved cots or accept cots donated by family members. While this approach supports environmental responsibility and resourcefulness, it is essential to ensure that all cots—regardless of origin—meet current safety standards as per the ACCC. The safety and well-being of children remain our top priority, and careful consideration must be given to the condition, design, and compliance of second-hand cots before use. By balancing sustainability with safety, we can create environments that are both responsible and secure.

Educators and the service should ensure the following:

- All cots meet Australian Standards for Cots AS/NZS 2172. The measurements listed in the ACCC as mandatory standard will be used as a guide to assess cots.
- Cot mattresses should be in good condition, clean, firm, flat and must fit the cot base with no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress and the sides of the cot.
- The cot must not have any hazardous gaps:
 - between 30mm-50mm that can entrap a child's limb
 - greater than 95mm that could entrap a child's head or neck

Fixed base cots and cots in the lowest base position

- The distance between the top of the mattress base and the top edge of the lowest cot side or end must be a minimum of:
 - 600 mm when the access is closed
 - 250 mm when the access is open.

Cots in the upper base position

- This distance between the top of the mattress base and the top edge of the lowest cot side or end must be a minimum of:
 - 400 mm when the access is closed
 - 250 mm when the access is open.
- As per ACCC product safety guidelines for second hand cots, there are no requirements for informative labels and safety markings. Even so, the minimum measurements as stated by the ACCC must be met.
- Cots must be situated away from windows where there are blinds and/or curtain cords.
- Cots must be situated away from power points, lights switches, heaters and electrical appliances.

- Fixed cots can be used, cots with sliding side door must be able to be secured in place with a latch.
- Mobiles and toys must be out of reach.
- Each child has their own bed linen. Children's bed linen will be washed at the end of care during the week or at the end of week, whichever comes first.
- Cots and mattresses protective covers are cleaned with soap and water when they are visibly soiled and as per cleaning routine.
- Precautions must be taken that reduce the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).
- Bassinets are not permitted on premises and must not be used.

Staff and family day care educators can refer to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) resource find out more: keeping baby safe – a guide to infant and nursery products, ACCC for product safety information, and a short ACCC video-clip regarding cot safety keeping baby safe – cot safety.

Use of portable cots

Portable cots (Portacots) used in our FDC Service must meet current mandatory Australian Standards for children's portable folding cots, AS/NZS 2195:2010.

Guidelines from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) suggest that Portacots are generally less robust than standard cots and must be checked regularly for damage and not used if any damage is detected. Regular checks must be made on the folding and locking mechanisms. Portacots must be used and set up as instructed including using the mattress designed specifically for the cot.

Portacots may be used for children who attend care on an occasional or irregular basis. However, they are **not suitable** for children who attend regularly. Regular use of portacots does not meet long-term safety and comfort standards required for ongoing care.

Additionally, portacots must **not** be used for any child who:

- Can stand up unassisted,
- Is able to shake or rock the sides of the cot, or
- Weighs more than 15 kg.

These limitations are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in care.

Sleep wear and environment

Educator will ensure to maintain the room temperature, airflow and lighting during rest periods. Educator can use music or language as per child's need to assist child to rest in a calm and relaxing environment.

Family day care educator monitors the temperature of the rest environment and address children's clothing needs accordingly.

Children resting in jumpers with hoods and cords are at higher risk of choking and should not be encouraged to wear these garments when resting.

Sleepwear should take into consideration the:

- child's age;
- safe resting practices established by the service;
- temperature of the rest environment;
- bed linen used for resting; and
- child's individual needs.

Request to vary sleep practices

Coordinators and educators must ensure families are informed that the Right Choice Family Day Care service's approach cannot deviate from current recommended safe sleeping practices due to the higher risk of SIDS associated with different practices.

In circumstances where a family request a sleep practices that varies from the recommended practices due to medically indicated reasons. A health care plan authorised by a medical practitioner that clearly outlines the safest sleep practices to be implemented for the child is required. In all other situations where a parent requests a practice that differs from this procedure, staff and family day care educators are to discuss safe sleeping practices with the family and the requirement to comply with this procedure, acknowledging the family's values, beliefs and concerns (including the challenges associated with introducing a new sleep routine).

In circumstances where it is considered that a family may not understand the risks associated with sleeping environments, educators should discuss referring the family to other services for further advice and support to provide a safe sleep environment.

Note: Prams and strollers are not to be used for children to sleep or rest in.

Coordination staff and educators should assess whether older babies or toddlers have the ability to climb over the sides of a cot as this presents a safety risk.

Safe sleeping resources

Family day care coordinators must ensure family day care educators are aware they can obtain information about recommended safe sleeping practices from:

www.rednose.com.au

Red Nose is Australia's leading authority on safe sleep and safer pregnancy advice. Downloadable brochures (in a range of languages) and smart phone applications, sign up for regular newsletters covering safe sleeping and child safety education

<https://www.productsafety.gov.au/>

Australia's consumer product safety regulator. Australian and Consumer Commission (ACCC) updates and specific information on product safety guidelines.

<https://www.kidsafevic.com.au/>

Kid Safe Victoria dedicated to the prevention of unintentional death and injury to children through education, advocacy and research.

Safe sleeping posters, fact sheets, safety advice and community support centre

Sun protection

Managing the outdoor environment

1. Family day care educators will consider the availability of shade when planning and implementing outdoor activities and excursions
2. Infants less than 12 months of age should remain in dense shade and not be exposed to direct sunlight.
3. Provided the UV Index is below **3** (moderate), unrestricted outdoor play may take place. If the UV Index is **3-5** (moderate), outdoor play is allowed provided appropriate sun protection measures are undertaken by educators and children whilst outdoors. The UV Index is available from the Bureau of Meteorology website at <http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/uv/index.shtml>
4. Appropriate sun protection measures are defined as a broad rimmed, bucket style or legionnaire's hat, clothing that covers as much skin as possible, SPF 30+ sunscreen, maximum use of available shade and sunglasses where these are practical. [Refer to <http://www.sunsmart.com.au/uv-sun-protection>]. If the UV Index reaches **6** (High) or above, outdoor play will cease.

Protective practices

1. If hats have cords remove if possible or ensure they are not a choking hazard.
2. Educators will model sun safe practices.
3. Educators will request permission from the parent/s/family to apply sunscreen.
4. Sunscreen of SPF 30+ broad spectrum and water resistant should be applied at least 20 minutes (or as per the manufacturer's instructions) before commencing outdoor play.
5. Sunscreen must be reapplied every 2 hours (or as per manufacturer's instructions).
6. If a child presents with an allergic reaction to the sunscreen, the educator will stop applying the sunscreen, notify the parent/s/family and request that a hypoallergenic sunscreen be supplied by the family for the child to use.

Maintaining hydration levels

Safe drinking water will be accessible to children throughout the day in both indoor and outdoor settings.

Communication with families

1. Sun protection practices will be shared with families.
2. Educators will actively promote sun safe practices through discussion of activities undertaken with children.
3. Families will be encouraged to implement the family day care educator's sun protection practices when participating in any excursions or experiences delivered by the family day care educator.

Commitment to sustainable practices

Our Family Day Care Service believes in educating children about being environmentally responsible which is promoted and supported through daily practices, resource and interactions. Sustainable practice is encouraged within the Service and community, assisting

Our Service is committed to protecting our environment to ensure a sustainable future for our children. This involves the Family Day Care Coordinator, educator and educator assistants, children and families working together to protect our environment as we educate children about the importance of being environmentally responsible within our everyday practice.

Our coordination can show sustainable practice by:

- networking with the local community to keep up to date with current practices and ideas for being environmentally responsible. This may include encouraging FDC educators to

- install water tanks, grey water system, convert toilet cisterns to dual flush, and convert to water saving taps at the residence/venue
- encourage FDC educators, educator assistants, and families and children to engage in sustainable practices and appreciate the natural environment
 - provide professional development opportunities for FDC educators to learn about integrating environmentally sustainable education into all areas of their program
 - where relevant, review policies and procedures within the FDC Service to achieve more sustainable outcomes (e.g., using individual hand towels instead of paper towel to dry hands)
 - use electronic communication where possible to reduce paper use within the principal office and between families for newsletters, billing, and other communication needs
 - conduct environmentally responsible audits to ensure consistency and continuous improvement
 - source resources and materials from Facebook Market Place or second-hand stores to use within the FDC service and in residences/venues

Educators can show sustainable practice by:

- role model environmentally responsible practices
- discuss environmentally responsible practices with the children and families as part of the curriculum
- provide information to families on environmentally responsible practices that are implemented at the FDC Service and encourage the application of these practices in the home environment
- share ideas between other FDC educators in other services
- role model energy and water conservation practices: For example, turning off lights and air-conditioning when a room is not in use, emptying water play containers onto garden areas.
- seek to purchase equipment that is environmentally friendly where possible. FDC educators will reduce the amount of plastic and disposable equipment they purchase and select materials that are made of natural materials.
- use the concept of 'reduce, re-use and recycle', which will become part of everyday practice for both children and educators to build lifelong attitudes towards environmentally responsible practices
- use 'green cleaning' products to replace chemicals where possible

Nappy changing and toilet training

Right Choice FDC acknowledges that nappy changing and toilet training routines are valuable opportunities to promote children's learning, meet individual needs and to develop strong relationships with children. Having their needs met in a caring and responsive way build's children's sense of trust and security.

Educators must ensure the nappy changing area is hygienic, to reduce the spread of germs and infectious disease. Educators must aim to make the nappy change experience a relaxed, happy and social routine that provides an opportunity for educators and children to further develop trusting and positive relationships.

PROCEDURE

Note: Children MUST NOT be left unattended on the change table at any time during this procedure.

- Wash hands
- Gather materials need for the nappy change
- Lay down paper towel on change mat
- Collect child
- Educator put gloves on either hand
- Remove any soiled clothing, placing in a plastic bag
- Remove nappy (soiled nappies to be placed in a plastic bag) and wipe child (clean child from front to back)
- Dispose of nappy, paper, wipes and gloves, peeling back from wrist and turning them inside out as they are removed, place into bin
- Put new gloves on if cream is required and then remove as above
- Put fresh nappy on
- Dress child
- Take child to wash and dry hands
- Return child to activity or play area
- Clean change table/pad with spray on detergent, spraying onto paper towel and wipe, place paper towel in bin
- Wash hands

Administration of first aid

First Aid qualifications

The family day care educator will:

- Possess a current approved first aid qualification.
- Undertake anaphylaxis management training.
- Undertake emergency asthma management training.
- Implement practices to minimize cross infection while providing first aid (e.g. wearing gloves).
- Maintain the list of emergency services, a list of the child's current contact numbers and emergency services and keep these in an accessible position at all times.

First Aid kits

1. The first aid kit will be accessible to family day care educators, family day care educator assistants, regular visitors, staff members, family day care educator family members, students, parents and volunteers, but inaccessible to children.
2. Family day care educator assistants, regular visitors, staff members, family day care educator family members, students, parents and volunteers will be informed of the location of the first aid kit on their first day in the family day care residence and/or venue.
3. Family day care educators will take a first aid kit for excursions and a permanent first aid kit will be located in the family day care educator's vehicle if transporting children.
4. Contents of the first aid kit are identified in the *First Aid Checklist form* and are to be replaced if used and kept within expiry date.
5. Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] aids (for example gloves and masks) are to be kept with the first aid kits.
6. If sharps (such as needles) are used by a child in care, the family day care educators will dispose of these in an approved Sharps Dispenser.

Communication with families

1. The family day care educator will obtain authorisation from parent/s and/or nominated contact on the enrolment form to administer first aid and obtain medical treatment and/or an ambulance if necessary.
2. Family day care educators will inform parent/s or nominated person on the enrolment form following a first aid response.

First Aid response

When a child in care is seriously injured or becomes ill, the family day care educators will:

1. Attend to the child immediately.
2. Give appropriate first aid treatment which may include medical assistance. Any medical or dental treatment required must be carried out by the parent/s/family nominated preferred medical/dental practitioner where possible.
3. Call an ambulance if required and stay with the child until the ambulance arrives.

4. Contact the parent/s or nominated contact on the enrolment form (by telephone or the most direct method of contact as indicated by the parent/s on the enrolment form) to inform that an ambulance has been called for their child.
5. Remain with other children in care whilst the child goes in the ambulance.
6. Contact the family day care service ASAP or by the next working day at the latest.

Please note: The ambulance response will be financed by the parent.

Any First Aid kit at the service must:

1. Not be locked.
2. Be in a place that takes no longer than two minutes to reach their nearest first aid kit.
3. Be constructed of resistant material, be dustproof and of sufficient size to adequately store the required contents
4. Be capable of being sealed and preferably be fitted with a carrying handle as well as have internal compartments.
5. Be maintained in proper condition and the contents are replenished as necessary.
6. Be **regularly checked** using the *First Aid Checklist* form to ensure the contents are as listed and have not deteriorated or expired.
7. The kit must be indicative it **is** a First Aid kit.
8. Be located in a convenient place where there is a risk of injury occurring.
9. Display emergency telephone numbers.
10. Be on each floor of a multi-level home.

Each educator is responsible for maintaining all First Aid kits at their home/venue.

First Aid Checklist

The checklist for first aid kits in Victoria does not specify the quantity of each item. It is in the Victorian Compliance Code/ First Aid in the Workplace.

http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/8706/First_aid_CC.pdf

Our service will determine that each educator is to have **two First Aid kits**; one in the home and one in the car.

Our educators will also ensure they are equipped with the appropriate resources to deal with a child at risk of anaphylaxis and other medical conditions. Educators may wish to provide additional items or modules, for example burns modules and eye wound modules.

Product name	Qty	Quantity and Expiry date met Yes/No
Basic First Aid notes		

Disposable gloves		
Resuscitation mask		
Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings		
Sterile eye pads (packet)		
Sterile coverings for serious wounds		
Triangular bandages		
Safety pins		
Small sterile unmedicated wound dressings		
Medium sterile unmedicated wound dressings		
Large sterile unmedicated wound dressings		
Non-allergenic tape		
Rubber thread or crepe bandage		
Scissors		
Tweezers		
Suitable book for recording details of first aid provided		
Sterile saline solution		

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness

This policy, and related policies at the service will be followed by family day care coordinators and educators of, and volunteers at, the service in the event that a child:

- (a) is injured; or
- (b) becomes ill; or
- (c) suffers a trauma.

If a child presents or develops one of the following presenting signs whilst in care, the family day care educator will contact the parent or emergency contact as listed in the enrolment documentation.

1. Ear and/or eye discharge;

2. Undiagnosed rash;
3. Body temperature of 37.5 degree Celsius or higher;
4. Persistent coughing episodes with difficulty in breathing;
5. Open sore with discharge;
6. Vomiting and/or continuous loose bowel episodes.

A child with symptoms that may be infectious should be isolated where possible but not out of the sight of the family day care educator.

The approved provider of the service will ensure that a parent of a child is notified as soon as practicably possible and without undue delay. Parents will be notified as soon as possible if their child is injured, becomes ill or suffers a trauma. The service will also ensure that an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record is completed in full (including parent signature) and without delay.

In the event of a serious incident our service will notify the regulatory authority no later than 24 hours after the incident. A serious incident includes:

- The death of a child
- Any incident involving injury, trauma or illness where medical attention was sought or should have been sought
- An incident at the service where the emergency services attended or should have attended
- A child is missing
- A child has been taken from the service without the authorisations required under the regulations
- A child is mistakenly locked in or out of the service.

We will keep the first aid qualifications of each educator up to date and record these qualifications at the service.

First aid kits will be readily available where children are present at the service and during excursions. First aid kits must be suitably equipped, easily recognisable and easy to access. Educators are required to carry a secondary first aid kit in their car as well.

Dealing with infectious diseases

If there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at a family day care residence the approved provider of the family day care service must ensure that a parent or an authorised emergency contact of each child being educated and cared for at the residence as part of the service is notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable.

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting individuals against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. Immunisation not only protects individuals, but also others in the community, by reducing the spread of disease.

Please note when **infectious disease** is referred to in this policy manual it means communicable diseases and notifiable diseases. Please see the quick guide for notifiable conditions in Victoria for further information: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/notify-condition-now>

Reporting of infectious diseases

Parent of Child

If the child is ill, prior to their arrival at family day care it is the responsibility of parents to inform the educator of any infectious disease or illness that their child may be suffering.

If there is any doubt as to whether the illness is infectious, a medical diagnosis may be sought clearing the child of an infectious illness before they can commence care.

Educator

It is the responsibility of educators to inform families and the coordination unit of any infectious disease that they or relevant family members may be suffering. Educators must also contact the coordination unit as soon as possible to assist in arranging alternate care for children if required. Educators cannot charge parents if the educator is unable to care for children due to his/her own family illness.

In the event an infectious disease arises at the service

In the event an infectious disease arises at the home of the educator, the educator must:

1. Isolate the child from other children.
2. Ensure the child is comfortable and appropriately supervised.
3. Contact the child's parents or nominated emergency contact. If the child's parents are unavailable, we will contact the alternative nominated individual. We will inform the contact of the child's condition and ask for a parent or other authorised individual to pick the child up as quickly as possible. Any individual picking the child up from the service must be approved by the child's parents and be able to show identification.
4. Ensure all bedding, towels and clothing which has been used by the child is disinfected. These items will be washed separately and if possible air dried in the sun.
5. Ensure all toys used by the child are disinfected.
6. Ensure all eating utensils used by the child are separated and sterilised.

7. Provide information in the child's home languages to the best of our ability.
8. Inform all service families and educators of the presence of an infectious disease.
9. Ensure confidentiality of any personal health related information obtained by the service and educators in relation to any child or their family.
10. If a child or educator has been unable to attend the service because of an infectious illness the individual must provide a doctors certificate which specifically states the child/staff member is ok to return to the service.

Exclusion due to an infectious disease

All people, including children and educators, who are suffering from any infectious disease, need to be excluded from the service to prevent others from being introduced to the infection. Educators' family members are to be excluded or kept separate from family day care children, depending on circumstances.

When any such person is found to be showing signs of any infectious disease:

- for children, their parents/guardians will be asked to immediately collect their child and seek medical advice;
- for educators, they will cease care as soon as possible, informing the coordination unit so that alternate care arrangements can be made, and should seek medical advice.

If it is not clear from the condition that exclusion is required, a diagnosis from a doctor or other practitioner should be sought to help make the decision.

Right Choice FDC reserves the right to refuse entry to a child who is showing symptoms of illness, such as cough, severe runny nose and/or fever.

Other circumstances to the child's are but not limited to:

- are unwell and unable to participate in normal activities or require additional attention
- have had a temperature/fever, or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- have had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours
- have been given medication for a temperature prior to arriving at the Service
- have started a course of anti-biotics in the last 24 hours or
- if we have reasonable grounds to believe that a child has a contagious or infectious disease (this includes COVID-19)

Recommended minimum periods of exclusion

Children who are not well should not attend the service. Children or educators suffering from an infectious disease should follow the exclusion period outlined in the below website.

Dealing with medical conditions

At Right Choice Family Day Care, the health and wellbeing of all children in our care is a top priority. We are committed to supporting children with medical conditions by working closely with families to ensure individual needs are met.

If your child has a diagnosed medical condition — such as asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy, or any other ongoing health concern — it is important to provide the service with a current and complete Action Plan prepared by your child's healthcare professional. This plan must clearly outline the necessary steps to manage your child's condition, including the administration of medication if required.

1. Parents must provide a *Medical Management Plan (Action Plan)* for a child who is at risk of Anaphylaxis or has a specific health need.
2. The family day care educator must follow a child's *Medical Management Plan* which may include plans for *asthma, allergy, anaphylaxis and diabetes*.
3. The family day care educator will inform the nominated supervisor, staff members, family day care assistants and volunteers of the requirements within the *Medical Management Plan*.
4. If applicable; a notice should be displayed advising that an enrolled child has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis.
5. The family day care service will support the self-administration of medication for children over pre-school age with parental authorisation. An *Authorisation for Self Administration of Medication form* must be completed.
6. An *Authorisation of Medication Record* must be completed by the parent prior to any medication being administered.
7. Prescribed medication can only be given if it's in its original container, bearing the original label with the name of the child, the dosage to be given and is within the expiry and use by date.
8. All non-prescribed medication (as an example: Paracetamol, nappy cream) must be in the original container with the original label, have clear dosage instructions and not expired.
9. In an emergency situation verbal authorisation can be given by a parent or person listed on the enrolment form.

10. Medication can be administered to a child without authorisation in the case of an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency. Emergency services will be contacted immediately. The parent of the child and the coordination unit must be notified as soon as practicable.
11. Any medication administered must be recorded by the family day care educator or family day care assistant on the *Authorisation of Medication Record* and signed by the parent.
12. The family day care educator must make available a copy of the family day care service's *Medical Conditions* policy to the parent if requested.
13. The *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* form must be kept by the family day care educator until the child is 25 years of age. If the family day care educator leaves the family day care service or ceases to operate, the records must be sent to the family day care service upon ceasing operations.

Awareness of risk and medical conditions risk minimisation plan

Educators must at all times be aware of the needs and safety of each child in their care. The service will take steps via education and regular communication with its educators to keep focus on this important matter.

When a child is enrolled at the service, information on any existing medical conditions, allergies will be required and should be provided by parents via the enrolment form. Then using a child's *Medical Management Plan*, the service will develop a *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan* in consultation with a child's parents. The *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan* must ensure that any risks are addressed and minimised.

Furthermore:

- Any information relating to the above medical conditions will be shared with relevant educators, volunteers and the family day care coordinator at the service. Educators will be briefed by the family day care coordinator on the specific health needs of each child.
- Information relating to a child's medical conditions, including the child's *Medical Management Plan*, *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan*, and the location of the child's medication will be shared with all educators and volunteers and displayed prominently in the educator's residence, to ensure all practices and procedures are followed
- All educators and volunteers at the service must follow a child's *Medical Management Plan* in the event of an incident related to a child's specific medical conditions requirements.
- Any allergens that may be present at the service will be communicated to parents and addressed through the *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan*, where applicable.

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction to a substance. While prior exposure to allergens is needed for the development of true anaphylaxis, severe allergic reactions can occur when no documented history exists. ***Anaphylaxis can be life threatening and this condition is to be taken seriously.***

Anaphylaxis can be caused by insect bites such as bees or wasps but is usually caused by a food allergy. Foods most commonly associated with anaphylaxis include peanuts, seafood, nuts and in children eggs and cow's milk.

Other common groups of substances which can trigger allergic reaction or anaphylaxis in susceptible children include:

- All types of animals, insects, spiders and reptiles.
- All drugs and medications, especially antibiotics and vaccines.
- Many homeopathic, naturopathic and vitamin preparations.
- Many species of plants, especially those with thorns and stings.
- Latex and rubber products.
- Band-Aids, Elastoplast and products containing rubber based adhesives.

Educators should be on the lookout for symptoms as they need to act rapidly if they do occur. Educators should immediately call 000 if symptoms arise. If you know an educator or child is prone to anaphylaxis reactions, and they carry an EpiPen® it should be injected and CPR should be initiated should the educator or child stop breathing.

However, steps should be taken to prevent anaphylaxis occurring as outlined below:

Upon enrolment, seek medical information from parents about any known allergies. Ask parents for supporting documentation as well as a *Medical Management Plan*. This *Medical Management Plan* should include a photo of the child, what triggers the allergy, first aid needed and contact details of the doctor who has signed the plan. This should be kept on the child's enrolment file and also be displayed in the service, in an area where an educator can easily access near a telephone, where possible. A copy should also be kept where the child's medication is stored. If the child is taken on an excursion, a copy of the management plan should be taken on the excursion. Should a child be known to have asthma or allergies requiring medication if a reaction occurs, the parents will be asked to provide the medication. Furthermore, should the child's treatment change, families are asked to provide the service with a new *Medical Management Plan* from their child's medical practitioner. Documentation will then be updated at the service. Medical management plan will be reviewed with parents annually.

To further ensure children with medical conditions and severe allergies are protected, parents will be asked not to send food with their children that contain high allergenic elements even if their child does not have an allergy. Educators are asked to follow the in relation to the safe handling, preparation, consumption and service of food by following the Nutrition, Food and Beverage policy.

Where possible, ensure all children with food allergies only eat food and snacks that have been prepared for them at home. These food and snack items will need to be clearly labelled with the date and name of the child it is intended for.

Identifying children with medical conditions

Any information relating to medical conditions will be shared with relevant educators, volunteers and the family day care coordinator at the service. Educators will be briefed by the family day care coordinator on the specific health needs of each child.

Information relating to a child's medical conditions, including the child's *Medical Management Plan*, *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan*, and the location of the child's medication will be shared with all educators and volunteers and displayed prominently in the educator's residence, to ensure all practices and procedures are followed.

Key points are:

- All educators and volunteers at the service must follow a child's Medical Management Plan in the event of an incident related to a child's specific medical conditions requirements.
- All educators and volunteers at the service must be able to identify a child with medical conditions easily.
- All educators and volunteers at the service must be able to locate a child's medication easily
- If an educator is providing food as part of their service, then details of a child's allergies should be displayed in the food preparation area, but must be done so in accordance with privacy guidelines, such as displaying in an area accessible to staff and not accessible to visitors or other families. Educators may explain to families the need to do so for the purpose of safety of the child and gain consent before doing so.

Attending the service without medication

Educators need to ensure that **no child who has been prescribed an adrenaline auto-injection device is permitted to attend the service** or its programs **without** the device.

The service will ensure that the auto-injection device kit is stored in a location that is known to all staff, easily accessible to adults (not locked away); inaccessible to children; and away from direct sources of heat.

Similarly, children who require medication for asthma or allergy also must only attend the service if the medication (and spacer with mask, if applicable) has been provided to the educator in advance or on the first day of care. For safety reasons, educators are not permitted to provide care to any child with a medical condition, who's medication has not been provided to the service.

Providing medication that will be kept at the educator residence is the responsibility of the parent. Medication cannot be taken home at the end of each day but can be returned if the child's enrolment ceases. It is a parent's responsibility to replace expiring medication with a new one BEFORE it expires.

The medication listed in a child's Action Plan must exactly match the medication provided to the educator. While we understand that some medications may be the same but differ by brand, we are not permitted to accept substitutes.

Communication plan

The service will inform and reminds its educators of our *Dealing with Medical Conditions* policy on a regular basis, as well as, each time a child with a medical condition joins the service and is assigned to a specific educator. As with the policy, the *Medical Management Plan* and *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan* will also be provided to the educator caring for a child who requires these.

Our service requires parent to have an ongoing and open approach to communicating any changes to the *Medical Management Plan* and *Medical Conditions Risk Minimisation Plan*, this will ensure that all relevant parties are updated on the child's treatment, along with any regulatory changes that may change the service's practices in regards to anaphylaxis.

Emergency and Evacuations

Emergencies are sudden unexpected events or situation that pose an imminent or severe risk to the persons at an education and care service and require immediate action to prevent injury or illness to individuals.

In the event that the educators premises needs to be evacuated, this will be conducted in a rehearsed, timely, calm and safe manner to secure the safety of each person and child using the service. The safety and wellbeing of each child, educator and person within the service is paramount above any other consideration in the time of an emergency or evacuation.

An evacuation may be necessary in the event of a fire, chemical spill, bomb scare, earthquake, siege, flood etc.

We will ensure:

- Staff conduct annual assessment of existing family day care educator's residence or venue or assessment of new family day care educator's residence or venue to prepare a risk assessment to identify potential emergencies relevant to the family day care residence or approved venue
- Emergency drills will be rehearsed by educators and children at least every 3 months, as well as with a few weeks of a new child joining the service.
- Emergency evacuation procedures along with emergency evacuation floorplan, will be clearly displayed near the entrance/exits of their premises. Evacuation plan should show:
 - Pre-planned evacuation procedures including routes and exits. Two ways out of each room used for care should be marked if possible.
 - Pre-planned designated meeting area which is accessible at all times.
- Ensure educators have an emergency bag, including contact numbers for each child, required medication, water, nappies, wipes, sanitiser, dry food (if required) and a mobile phone.
- Ensure educators document the rehearsals of the emergency and evacuation procedures with the date, time and names of children present and any notable outcomes (any problems occurred during rehearsal, strategies that worked well, improvements required etc.)
- Ensure educators must display copy of the emergency contact numbers at family day care residence/venue.
- Ensure all available exits out of the home have an exit sign displayed
- Ensure educators have emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets, and are adequately trained for their use.
- Ensure educators have working and sufficient smoke detectors positioned throughout their home/venue and are tested regularly.
- All exits are kept clear and if locked the key is kept easily accessible to enable a quick departure.
- Provide awareness and support to children before, during and after emergencies and drills
- Ensure near miss incidents are documented and communicated to the coordination unit.

Emergency management plans

Our service is required to complete an emergency management plan for educators residence situated in a bush fire prone area, as well as residences that may be at risk of grass fire due to its surrounding area. The emergency management plan will assist in managing the risks associated with residence location and will reflect the operating context of the FDC residence.

Emergency management plans will be developed in consultation with relevant authorities and reviewed at least once every 12 months.

Evacuation procedure

The Family Day Care Educator will make the final call as to whether to evacuate the residence and or venue. The residence and or venue will be evacuated when an emergency situation is declared.

The following procedure will apply:

- 1) The Family Day Care Educator will:
 - a. Inform all persons in the residence and or venue to evacuate.
 - b. Move all persons to the primary evacuation assembly area as indicated in the emergency plan
 - c. If the Family Day Care residence and or venue emergency exits as indicted on the emergency plan evacuation strategies are blocked, then:
 - i. The Family Day Care Educator will use any alternative evacuation exits to ensure all persons leave the residence and or venue in a safe manner.
 - ii. If the primary evacuation assembly area is affected by the emergency, the Family Day Care Educator will immediately identify an alternative assembly area for all persons to assemble at.
 - d. Take the attendance record/device, emergency bag and first aid kit (if not already in emergency bag) when evacuating.
 - e. Check all children and adults at the residence venue at that time are in the evacuation assembly area.
 - f. Keep all children calm during the evacuation.
 - g. Telephone 000 or the local emergency service required and give their name, location of emergency (town street number and telephone number).
 - h. Inform the co-ordination unit of the evacuation.
 - i. The coordination unit will inform relevant families.
 - j. Once the area has been declared safe by the appropriate authorities the educator and the children can re-enter the residence and or venue.
 - k. Complete an incident report and forward a copy to the coordination unit ASAP.

Bushfire risk

Victoria has a number of bush fire prone areas and it is important to be aware of relevant emergency procedures. As required by the conditions set out on our service approval, we will identify any family day care residence or venue in a bush fire or grass fire prone area or , and ensure the educator is aware of what action to take in the event of an emergency and declared code red day.

Educators living in a risk zone are encouraged to complete a **bushfire survival plan**, a written and well-practiced plan will help you remember what needs to be done during a crisis.

Monitoring bushfire risk

The coordination staff will assess the location of each educators residence and determine whether the residence or venue is located in a high risk of bushfire or grass fire area. Staff will use the Land Vic database to generate a property report that will contain the relevant information required. Additionally, as part of a home safety check, the outer surrounding of a residence will be evaluated for risk of grass fire. Any family day care residence or venue situated in a bush fire zone or grass fire area, **must not provide care to children on a declared code red day, also known as ‘Catastrophic’ rating.**

Fire danger ratings are forecast over a four-day period. The coordination unit will monitor fire danger ratings continuously via VicEmergency app, social media outlets (CFA face book page or twitter) or via the CFA website <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-and-ratings/> and inform parents and educators via phone of service closure.

Educators who reside in a bush fire prone or grass fire area will be added to our Bushfire register. Educators are required to install the VicEmergency app on their phone and set their watch zone to 20km radius from their residence. Any notification from the VicEmergency app must be checked promptly.

We encourage all other educators and families to also monitor the fire danger ratings for their district by downloading the VicEmergency app. **Children are not to attend family day care on CODE RED (Catastrophic rating) days.**

For more information on your district see: <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/find-your-fire-district/>

Other Sources of information

Facebook ([facebook.com/cfavvic](https://www.facebook.com/cfavvic))

Twitter (twitter.com/CFA_Updates)

ABC local radio, Sky News and other emergency broadcasters

VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)

Preparation prior to an emergency

Conduct a risk assessment to prepare emergency evacuation procedures for bush fires considering:

- prevention measures the FDC educator will take prior and during the bush fire period
- response measures the FDC educator will take if confronted with a bush fire hazard or emergency
- identified evacuation assembly areas and evacuation routes
- whether assistance will be required to evacuate children at the residence or venue (including non-ambulant children and infants, consideration for multi-story homes)
- what mechanisms are in place to ensure the transfer of real-time information, such as weather forecasts, bush fire activity, site closures and emergency operations
- how parents will know where to locate their child if evacuated
- procedures to ensure children are only released to persons authorised to collect them
- mechanisms to ensure visitors, other residents in home and contractors are aware of the service's emergency response procedures
- examine the grounds of their residence/venue during daily indoor and outdoor safety checks to ensure flammable and/or combustible materials (e.g., dead leaves and bark, chemicals) have been removed
- ensure trees are trimmed to 2m from the FDC residence
- ensure they are familiar with the daily Fire Danger Rating (FDR)
- conduct an 'emergency first aid kit / backpack audit' to ensure emergency contact information and supplies are current.
- keep accurate attendance records of children in care each day
- ensure they have ready access to an operating telephone or other similar means of communication to enable immediate communication to and from parents and emergency services at all times education and care is provided
- ensure all contact details of parents/carers and emergency contact details are up to date and a record is provided to the coordination unit.
- ensure these policies are available for inspection at all times the service is educating and caring for children
- ensure emergency exits are clearly indicated

Emergency bag contents checklist

Use the list below as a guide on what is required to maintain your emergency bag.

EMERGENCY BAG CONTENTS	✓
Small portable First Aid kit	
Copy of Bush Fire policy & Emergency Management Plan, if applicable	
Emergency contact details for children	
Details of additional/medical needs of staff and children	
Potentially required medications (e.g. EpiPen, asthma inhaler)	
Charged mobile phone	
Phone chargers to suit any mobile phone likely to be used in an emergency	
Portable battery powered radio, if applicable	
Torch and spare batteries	
Whistle/s	
House keys	
Bottled water and disposable cups	
Non-perishable snacks (such as biscuits/crackers, dried fruit, energy/muesli bars)	
Spare nappies, baby wipes, and gloves	
Tissues	
Sunscreen and spare hats	
Garbage bags	

Procedure for service closures

1. All services listed as within a bushfire risk zone will close and children are not allowed to attend
2. Where services are closed or evacuated as a consequence of an emergency or service closure families will still be liable to pay fees.
3. In some situations, services may elect to close their services during Severe or Extreme fire danger ratings. Where educators elect to close on a lower risk rating parents will not be liable to pay fees.
4. Educators will contact all families informing them of service closures
5. Right Choice FDC will notify families services closures via email.

Bushfire evacuation procedure

In the event of a bush fire emergency, notification to evacuate may be issued by emergency services or the Approved Provider. FDC educators will monitor the Fire Danger Ratings daily and take appropriate actions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

Fires in local area- Watch and Act

Conditions are changing and action to protect the safety of children and adults at the service is required.

The educator will:

- contact the Approved Provider and request assistance in contacting all parents/guardians or emergency contacts to request them to collect their child from the FDC residence immediately
- move children to indoor play
- close windows and doors
- gather children's personal items into their bags
- gather emergency evacuation bag (collect sign in book/record/device, medication, visitor sign in sheets)
- ensure all exits are clear
- alert family members in the residence of possible evacuation
- keep in contact with the Approved Provider (notification will need to be made to the regulatory authority within 24 hours of the serious incident)

Emergency Warning

This is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert. Immediate action is required.

- Evacuate immediately (this may be directed by emergency services or the Approved Provider)
- Inform children and visitors and other residents of the FDC residence to evacuate as per Evacuation Procedure
- request assistance to move infants or children with disabilities from other adults in the home/educator assistant or emergency services if unable to complete the evacuation on their own
- check that all children and adults are accounted for
- once children are safely evacuated, administer first aid if required
- call 000 and provide name, address and nearest cross street, mobile phone contact number, number of children evacuating

- notify the Approved Provider/Coordinator of the evacuation (only if children's safety is not compromised)
- if the identified evacuation assembly area is not accessible, identify an alternative area where children and other adults will be safe. Communicate with emergency services to confirm your assembly area
- remain calm and reassure children
- once emergency services arrive, request assistance with supervision and contact parents/emergency contacts
- ensure that no family members, children, or visitors leave the evacuation area until the considered safe by emergency services
- maintain attendance register with parent signatures/sign in when children are collected from evacuation area
- in the event of a fire within or near the residence resulting in damaged phone lines, the educator may evacuate the children and seek assistance from neighbouring residents and / or use the mobile phone
- continue to check the building/evacuation area and surrounds for any other danger
- following the bushfire incident, review the evacuation procedure and incident that took place
- debrief with the approved provider/coordinator
- complete an Incident Report and an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record. The approved provider will make a notification of a serious incident to the regulatory authority within 24 hours.

Communication equipment

The family day care educator must have access to operating communication equipment (for example but not limited to telephone, mobile phone, two-way radio) to enable immediate communication to and from emergency services, parents and or the coordination unit.

Furthermore, educators must answer a call from the coordination unit, or if unavailable at time of call, return the call in a timely manner. **It is the responsibility of the educator to ensure their land line or mobile phone is in working order.** We understand at times your primary means of contact may be out of order and under repair. In this case you must have an alternative contact number you can be reached on and you must notify the coordination unit of this immediately.

Undertaking a risk assessment

A risk assessment will be conducted on each home and its surrounding areas to ensure no potential hazards, likely to cause injury or harm exists. The risk assessment will also take into

account the likelihood of fire, explosion, dangerous chemical spill, medical emergency and natural disaster.

This service will conduct a risk assessment, of each residence and approved venue before education and care is provided to children, and then at least annually. The following matters will be considered as part of the assessment:

- premises, furniture and equipment
- fencing and security
- sufficiency of furniture, materials and equipment
- adequacy of laundry facilities or other arrangements for dealing with soiled clothing
- adequacy of toilet, washing and drying facilities
- adequacy of ventilation and natural light
- glass safety issues
- suitability of the residence or venue for the number, ages and abilities of the children who attend or are likely to attend the service
- suitability of nappy change arrangements
- existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pools at or near the premises
- any risk posed by animals.

At the conclusion of the assessment a staff member of the service will discuss with the educator regarding the outcome and any issues that require attention. The educator is responsible for keeping a safe and clean home, free of hazards and obstacles that may hinder a safe exit from the home during an evacuation or emergency.

Furthermore, educators are required to complete a daily safety checklist and display this in a common area.

Changes to FDC residence

Family day care educators must advise the service of any proposed renovations, any changes that may affect the matters considered as part of the assessment of the premises and any other changes that will affect the education and care provided.

Frequency of emergency drills

Emergency evacuation procedures must be practiced regularly with the children (once every 3 months) and shortly after a new child starts at the service.

Records of emergency drills

A record showing that the above drill has been implemented will be kept at the educators home. This record will show the date, time, children present during the drill and any comments.

Records that are superseded by a new record must be archived and accessible if requested. Educators must not discard any completed records of an emergency drill.

Educators please note: *An emergency evacuation bag must be ready at all times. This bag must include an emergency contact list of parents/guardian details for each child in your care, any medications a child may require, water and snacks. A whistle must also be on display so it can be used in the event of an emergency. Refer to emergency bag checklist.*

Delivery and collection of children

The following procedure must be adhered to at all times to ensure the safety of the children.

Arrival

- All children must be signed **IN** by their parent or responsible adult as nominated in their enrolment forms. This also assists educators in the event of evacuation of the service.
This is the parent/caregiver's responsibility.
- To ensure each child is cared for at all times, an educator will greet and receive the child at all times.
- An allocated area for the children's belongings should be made available to children and their families.

Departure

- Educators are to ensure that the authorised nominees for collecting children is kept up to date.
- Children may only be collected by a parent or authorised nominee
- No child will be released into the care of any individuals not known to educators. If educators do not know the individual by appearance, the individual must be able to produce some form of photo identification to prove that they are an authorised nominee as listed on the child's enrolment forms.
- Parents must give prior notice where the individual collecting the child is someone other than those mentioned on the enrolment form, e.g. in an emergency situation. The individual nominated by the parent must be able to produce some form of identification.
- Children are not to be released into the care of individuals not authorised to collect the child, e.g. court orders concerning custody and access.
- Parents must give prior notice of any variation in the individuals picking up the child. If notice is not given, and educators cannot contact the parent, the child must not be released into the care of that individual.
- If the individual collecting the child appears to be intoxicated, or under the influence of drugs, and educators feel that the individual is unfit to take responsibility for the child,

the educators are to bring the matter to the individual's attention before releasing the child into their care. Wherever possible, such discussion is to take place without the child being present. Educators are to suggest that they contact another parent or Authorised Nominee from the enrolment form, inform them of the situation and request they collect the child as soon as possible. If the individual refuses to allow the child to be collected by another Authorised Nominee, educators are to inform the police of the circumstances, the individual's name and vehicle registration number.

- Educators cannot prevent a parent from collecting a child, but do have a moral obligation to persuade a parent to seek alternative arrangements if they feel the parent is in an unfit state to accept responsibility for the child.
- All children must be signed **OUT** by a parent or authorised nominee.
- At the end of each day educators must check all beds and the premises including outdoors and indoors to ensure that no child remains on the premises after the service closes.
- Children may leave the premises if the parent or authorised nominee has provided written authorisation for the child to do so, such as an excursion.
- Children may leave the premises in the event of an emergency, including medical emergencies.
- Children may be released into the care of a person or taken outside of the premises: because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care/treatment

Individuals visiting our service must also sign in when they arrive at the service, and sign out when they leave. Details of absences during the day must also be recorded.

Educators must ensure a child being cared for does not leave the premises or venue except in accordance with regulation 99(4).

Excursions

The service acknowledges the value of relevant excursions in allowing children to gain a greater insight of the community in which they live, and learn from these experiences. Our service will actively seek to minimise any risks associated with excursions, and respond promptly and appropriately to any emergency whilst on an excursion. Educators will educate children and families regarding road safety.

Excursion risk assessment and planning process

- The educator must conduct a risk assessment prior to an excursion taking place.
- Risk assessments are only required once if the excursion is a regular outing. Regular outings are walks or trips to places that we visit regularly and which always have the same risks.

- The risk assessment must be recorded using the appropriate risk assessment template. An excursion that is purely for regular transport to school or kinder, will require the 'Transporting Children' template for completion. An excursion that requires more than just transportation, or if it is a one-off excursion will require 'Excursions' template to be completed. Parents should view the risk assessment prior to providing consent.

Using the *risk assessments*, the educator must take into consideration the following:

- Date(s) of excursion/days of excursion for ongoing outings.
 - Any risk that the excursion may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child and identify how these risks will be managed and minimised.
 - Any water hazards.
 - Any risks associated with water-based activities.
 - Transportation (to and from).
 - Means of transportation
 - Requirement for seatbelts
 - Estimated departure and travel times
 - The number and ratio of adults and children which must comply at least with the minimum required by regulation.
 - Pick up location and destinations
 - Whether additional adult supervision, such as parent helpers, are required to provide adequate supervision.
 - Proposed activities.
 - Proposed duration.
 - Description for entering and exiting the service and pick up location or detitination
 - The procedure for embarking and disembarking the vehicle
 - Any medical conditions that need to be considered and managed for each child with specific health needs.
- A parent or authorised nominee must provide a written authority for each child who is attending the excursion using the 'Authorisation for Regular Outing and Regular Transportation' form. This authorisation only needs to be obtained once every 12 months for regular excursions. A risk assessment must be completed before an authorisation can be requested from a parent or guardian.

When completing an 'Authorisation for Regular Outing and Regular Transportation' The authorisation should include the following information:

- the child's name; and
- the reason the child is to be taken outside the premises; and

- if the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings; and
 - if the authorisation is for an excursion that is not a regular outing, the date the child is to be taken on the excursion; and
 - a description of the proposed destination for the excursion; and
 - if the excursion involves transporting children—
 - the means of transport; and
 - any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and
 - the proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion; and
 - the period the child will be away from the premises; and
 - the anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion; and the anticipated ratio of educators attending the excursion to the anticipated number of children attending the excursion; and
 - the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion; and
 - that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.
- Using the 'Authorisation for Regular Outing and Regular Transportation' form, the service will ensure that the emergency contact details for each child are up to date.

Insurance

Any excursion planned must be consistent with the requirements / exclusions of the Public Liability Cover held by the educator.

Safe transport of children

Compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations is mandatory to ensure the safety of children at all times and new provisions and amendments to these regulations are reflected in our procedures and policy for transportation and the safe handover of children. Educators may transport children to and from school and other relevant location with the written permission of the parents. Transporting children may include by car, public transport or walk. A child must not be taken outside the education and care service premises on an excursion unless authorisation is given by the child's parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record (regulation 102).

We acknowledge our ensuring duty of care obligations by adhering to relevant legislation providing adequate supervision of children at all times, maintaining correct educator to child ratios, maintaining accurate attendance records and providing appropriate child restraints for children under our care.

The safety of children enrolled at our service is paramount. Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. Appropriate safety measures have been implemented through our comprehensive risk assessment process to ensure supervision is adequate at all times including transportation.

When determining whether to transport children the educator will need to take adequate precautions to protect children from harm and hazards. This would include requirements for child restraints where applicable. An educator can only travel with the number of children that can be safely transported in the car. VicRoads advises that everyone travelling in a motor vehicle must use a child restraint, booster seat or seat belt that is properly adjusted and fastened. For more information go to: <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/road-rules/a-to-z-of-road-rules/seat-belts-and-child-restraints>

Definitions (effective 1 October 2020)

Regular outing: in relation to an education and care service, means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination

- (a) that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program; and

- (b) where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are *substantially* the same on each outing

Regular transportation: in relation to an education and care service, means the transportation by the service or arranged by the service (other than as part of an excursion) of a child being educated and cared for by the service, where the circumstances relevant to a risk assessment are *substantially* the same for each occasion on which the child is transported.

Written authorisation: authorisation given by a parent or other person named in the child's enrolment record as having authority to authorise the child being transported by the service or on transportation arranged by the service. If the transportation is regular transportation, the authorisation is only required to be obtained once in a 12-month period. The authorisation must state:

- a) the child's name; and
- b) the reason the child is to be transported; and
- c) if the authorisation is for a regular outing, a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings; and
- d) if the authorisation is not for a regular transportation, the date the child is to be transported; and
- e) a description of the proposed pick-up location and destination; and
- f) the means of transport; and
- g) the period of time during which the child is to be transported; and
- h) the anticipated number of children likely to be transported; and
- i) the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children during the transportation; and
- j) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported; and
- k) that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the education and care service; and
- l) that written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the education and care service.

Transport specific risk assessment

As per the Education and Care Services National Law, our FDC Service will '*ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children...from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury*' (Section 167).

Our FDC Educators will conduct comprehensive transport specific risk assessments to minimize and manage all potential risks for transporting children before authorisation is sought to transport a child from the Approved Provider. [Reg. 102B, 102D(4)].

A risk assessment will be undertaken at least annually for '*regular transportation*' of children. Each time a FDC Educator transports, or arranges, the transport of children as part of an excursion, a new risk assessment will be conducted. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our service.

Our risk assessment process will:

- identify any hazards or potential hazards that transporting the child may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of the child
- assess the risk of harm or potential harm using a risk matrix
- specify how the identified risks will be managed by eliminating or minimising the impact using control measures
- evaluate the current risk or potential harm by implementing control measures
- review and monitor the risk or potential harm to ensure it continues to be managed as a low risk

source: Risk assessment and management ACECQA (2020)

Our risk assessment will consider:

- a) the proposed route and duration of the transportation; and
- b) the proposed pick-up location and destination; and
- c) the means of transport; and
- d) any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints (as per the law of our jurisdiction); and
- e) any water hazards; and
- f) the number of adults and children involved in the transportation; and
- g) given the risks posed by transportation, the number of educators or other responsible adults to provide supervision and whether any adults with specialized skills are required; and
- h) whether any items should be readily available during transportation (mobile phone, list of emergency contact numbers) and;
- i) the process for entering and exiting-
 - i. the education and care service premises; and
 - ii. the pick-up location or destination (as required); and
- j) procedures for embarking and disembarking the means of transport, including how each child is to be accounted for on embarking and disembarking.

The Coordinator and FDC Educator will ensure:

- risk assessments are carried out prior to seeking authorisation for transporting children is made with the Approved Provider
- risk assessments for 'regular transportation' are evaluated regularly to ensure potential risks are identified and managed
- risk assessments for 'regular transportation' are reviewed at least annually
- details of the safest route for travel, type of vehicle and required restraints are included in the risk assessment
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury
- compliance with first aid requirements of Regulation 136 are met at all times
- parents/guardians complete a written authorisation for transportation of their child and a copy of this is filed in the child's enrolment record
- children are instructed on processes for entering and exiting the service premises and are aware of the pick-up and destination locations
- children's attendance is checked against an accurate attendance record showing when children are within the care of the FDC service. The record of attendance must record the time that the child arrives and departs
- children's attendance is checked by the FDC educator before departure from the designated pick up location and marked as present as they disembark from the vehicle
- procedures for the safe handover of children between the Service and other educational site is documented correctly (if applicable)
- educator to child ratio requirements are maintained at all times
- children wear approved seatbelts/restraints whilst the vehicle is in motion
- children are never left unattended in the vehicle
- education on road safety for children is included in the Service's programming (for example Kids and Traffic, Vic Roads Primary School roads information)
- safety rules are developed with children to ensure a clear understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- they are aware of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of a vehicle crash involving children from the service
- a working mobile phone is carried in case of emergency
- a list of emergency contact numbers for the children being transported is available at all times
- every effort will be made to notify parents/carers of delays returning to the Service if applicable

- relevant criminal history requirements and Working with Children Checks are made for any person transporting children. WWCC details are recorded in staff records.
- the FDC educator or assistant driving the vehicle holds a current Australian driver's licence
- any allegation of misconduct of the educator or other adult will be reported immediately to the CCYP as per the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Safe maintenance of transportation vehicle

The Coordinator and FDC Educator will ensure:

- the transportation vehicle is fitted with the required child restraints, approved by the Roads and Traffic Authorities (see Rule 266 of the Australian Road Rules)
- the vehicle has enough fuel to transport the children each day as in accordance to schedule
- the vehicle is registered, roadworthy and insured (general legal requirements and best practice standards are adhered to)
- any repairs are completed as soon as possible by a qualified mechanic
- all educators or educator assistants hold a current Australian driver's licence, licenced to carry the required number of passengers for the vehicle
- in the event of any mechanical or other breakdown, children will be kept safe, comfortable and occupied with suitable activities
- every effort will be made to notify parents/carers of delays returning to the service if applicable

The Approved Provider, Coordinator and FDC Educators will ensure:

- driver's licence is current, and they are licenced to carry the required number of passengers for the purpose
- every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- they adhere to the road rules and regulations mandated by law within each state/territory
- children remain seated and do not behave in a dangerous or inappropriate manner
- the vehicle is parked in a secure and safe location for children to access
- the number of passengers does not exceed the legal requirement
- a working mobile phone is taken in case of an emergency
- an easily recognised and suitably equipped first aid kit is easily accessible during transportation
- FDC educators and Educator Assistants accompanying children during transportation hold:

- an approved first aid qualification
- a current approved anaphylaxis management training qualification and
- an approved emergency asthma management training qualification.

Picking up children and during transportation

The FDC Educator and/or Educator Assistant will ensure:

- the vehicle will be parked in a safe location where children are not required to cross any roads
- the children's attendance record is checked by the educator as children assemble in a predetermined location at the residence or venue prior to embarking the vehicle
- children are continuously supervised during transportation by the educator
- children are to remain seated until the vehicle has completely stopped
- the educator or educator assistant complies with all appropriate road, safety and transport regulations
- under no circumstances will the educator or educator assistant supervising the children use handheld mobile phones unless safely parked and the engine switched off.
- under no circumstances will educator or educator assistant supervising children be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- the educator or educator assistant has the right, *if required* to stop in a safe place until the children conform to the safety guidelines. Parents will be notified if their child continues to be challenging and/or behaving in a dangerous manner.

Dropping off children

- children are to remain seated until the vehicle/bus has completely stopped
- the FDC educator/educator assistant will assist children to safely disembark the vehicle/bus
- children will exit the vehicle/bus using the 'safety door' or door located near the kerb (if possible) or within the driveway of the residence/venue
- each child will be accounted for as they assemble in a safe area at the end of the journey.
- the FDC educator will conduct a final sweep of the vehicle/bus, checking on and under seats to ensure there are no children or belongings left behind
- once inside the residence/venue, the children are signed in which will provide an additional attendance check to confirm all are present

Families will:

- communicate any change in transportation requirements for their child with their FDC Educator as soon as they are aware (for example: no transport is required on a particular day as the child has returned home from school due to illness)
- notify the service if their child is going to be absent on a particular day and not require transport
- ensure written permission for transportation of their child by the service is granted by either the parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record
- timely update of emergency contact numbers with the service

Safe arrival of children

Right Choice FDC aims to ensure the safe and secure arrival and departure of all children into our service who may be travelling to or from another early childhood service or education facility. We are committed to identifying and minimising risks and potential hazards to ensure children are not placed at risk of harm or hazard when travelling between other educational facilities and our service.

Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury. Appropriate safety measures have been implemented through our risk assessment process to ensure supervision is adequate at all times including when children are travelling between our service and another location.

Our risk assessment will be reviewed by the educator at least once every 12 months and will consider the following potential risk and mitigation measures.

Activity	Potential Risk	Risk level	Control measure	Responsible person
Safe Arrival Procedures	Leaving child at destination or in the vehicle/losing a child	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all children are properly seated and buckled up before departure. • Conduct regular seatbelt checks throughout the journey. • Complete a headcount each time children enter or leave the vehicle or destination. • Check the vehicle thoroughly upon arrival at the destination to ensure no child is left 	Educator

			behind.	
	Children being left unsupervised during arrival at destination	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure educator hands child over to a parent, teacher, or kindergarten staff member at the arrival point. • Ensure the child safely enters the building and is under the supervision of the appropriate adult before leaving. 	Educator
	Miscommunication about pickup/drop-off location or time	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the arrival time with parents beforehand. • Confirm the pick-up point (e.g., door, entrance) and the staff member who will be receiving the child. • For regular drop-offs and pick-ups, times will be confirmed with parents during the enrolment process. 	Educator & Parent
	Delayed transport or traffic issues causing late arrival	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build extra time into transport schedules to account for delays. • Notify parents promptly if late arrival is anticipated. 	Educator & Parent
	Inadequate supervision of children at arrival	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children should be supervised all the times • Educators must ensure to children safely enter destinations buildings or school grounds 	Educator
	Unauthorised person attempting to pick up a child		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure identification protocols (e.g., photo ID) for anyone collecting the child. • Check identification details of persons collecting child, against authorised persons information in enrolment form. • Use a pin system with parents for additional security. 	Educator & Parent

Providing a child safe environment

Right Choice Family Day Care recognises the importance of providing a safe environment for all children at our service. All children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health and safety.

Our service is committed to the safety, wellbeing and support of all children and young people. Management, staff and volunteers will treat all children with the utmost respect and understanding at all times. To protect children from abuse, our FDC service embeds strategies to ensure a culture of child safety by providing a safe environment for the children in our care. Our educators are in a position to monitor behavioural and emotional changes, physical injuries, and the general wellbeing of a child. The supportive environment of a childcare setting and the relationships that educators develop with children may lead to a child making a disclosure about child abuse. Our educators are trained to identify signs and behaviours that may indicate child abuse and understand their obligations and responsibilities to respond to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of child abuse as mandated reporters.

We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to comply with both the Victorian New Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

We are dedicated in promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. Our Service takes every reasonable effort to accommodate the diversity of all children by implementing the Child Safe Standards.

Coordinators, FDC Educators and educator's assistants, understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from abuse and neglect and maintain up-to-date knowledge of child protection law (reg 84). Coordinators, FDC educators and educator assistants will undertake child protection awareness training every 12 – 18 months or whenever significant changes are made to the child protection law or reporting requirements. All staff and educators engaged by our FDC service must comply with our Code of Conduct at all times.

Our Family Day Care Service takes a 'zero' tolerance approach to child abuse and are committed to raise awareness about the importance of child safety in our environment and the community.

Implementation by educators

To ensure children are cared for in a child safe environment, educators will:

- a) ensure children are adequately supervised at all times
- b) promote the safety of children at all times
- c) encourage children to contribute in planning and making decisions, and have a voice in all aspects of their care.
- d) organise room and play areas to minimise risk to children
- e) monitor and minimise hazards and safety risks in the environment
- f) notify the coordination unit if there is a change to the adults living in the residence
- g) take every reasonable precaution to protect children being educated and cared for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury
- h) foster a culture of openness and respect where children feel safe to disclose risk of harm or abuse.
- i) respect the and embrace the diversity of children
- j) listen to and act decisively on any child safety concerns or allegations of abuse that are made
- k) recognise, respect and foster children's rights where their voices and views are listened to and valued
- l) recognise the vulnerability of particular groups of children including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability, children in out of home care (OOHC) and children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background
- m) promote child safety with families and share information
- n) keep passwords to programs and devices confidential
- o) model appropriate use of digital devices and online services for learning purposes
- p) identify and minimise risks to children in physical and online environments
- q) ask permission before taking photos of children on any device so children begin an understanding of how photos of them can be used and where they will be published
- r) ensure privacy levels are set on electronic devices when in use by young children
- s) participate in professional development opportunities about online safety and digital technology
- t) ensure children's personal information where children can be identified such as name, address, age, date of birth etc is not shared online
- u) consider the developmental levels of children when using technology for early learning
- v) ensure that an appropriate balance between inactive and active time is maintained each day.
- w) ensure that under no circumstances the screen is used as a reward or to manage challenging behaviours

- x) provide children with access to age-appropriate technologies to help develop their computer literacy skills
- y) introduce concepts to children about online safety at age-appropriate levels
- z) only provide technology to children in an open visible space, so close supervision can be maintained.

Implementation by coordination unit

The coordination unit will ensure a child safe environment by:

- a) building a child safe culture
- b) drive changes in organisational culture by embedding child safety in everyday practice.
- c) providing a minimum standard of child safety across the whole organisation
- d) ensuring that our service has a zero tolerance to discrimination
- e) Promote and celebrate cultural celebrations and events.
- f) keeping up to date with all current Child Safety Standards
- g) educating all staff about key indicators of child abuse
- h) conducting a risk assessment of the educators home and backyard environment on a regular basis to determine any risks to children's health and safety
- i) analysing and evaluating the risks associated with identified hazards
- j) determining appropriate ways to eliminate or control identified hazards; and
- k) reviewing risk assessments after any serious incident report is made to the coordination unit and Department of Education.
- l) discussing child safe standards in meeting
- m) continuing unannounced monitoring visits to educators
- n) having a code of conduct that all staff will follow
- o) discussing child safe standards at induction
- p) ensure effective processes are in place to respond to and report allegations of child abuse to the appropriate authorities (See child safety reporting process flowchart)
- q) ensuring that the approved provider or nominated supervisor or person in day-to-day charge of the service or Coordinator, has read a person's Working with Children Check before the person is engaged as a FDC Educator, Educator Assistant, volunteer or staff member at the service.
- r) ensuring the approved provider has read a person's Working with Children Check before nominating that person as a nominated supervisor or person in day-to-day charge of the service or Coordinator (This does not apply to a person who is a registered teacher under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and has current registration).

- s) ensuring the approved provider of a Family Day Care service has read and considered a person's criminal history before engaging or registering the person as a Family Day Care educator, educator assistant or staff member.
- t) ensure visitors to our service implementing professional development are suitable and approved to work with children.
- u) Provide information on Online Safety to educators and discuss at team meetings.

Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards are underpinned by the understanding that all children are vulnerable. However, three overarching principles require organisations to consider the increased vulnerability of:

- Aboriginal children
- those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- with disabilities.

These groups of children and young people may be particularly vulnerable to being victimised and may face challenges in reporting an incident of abuse.

To understand more about Child Safe Standards visit each of these links:

[Standard 1: Governance and leadership](#)

[Standard 2: Clear commitment to child safety](#)

[Standard 3: Code of conduct](#)

[Standard 4: Human resource practices](#)

[Standard 5: Responding and reporting](#)

[Standard 6: Risk management and mitigation](#)

[Standard 7: Empowering children](#)

Key risks to children

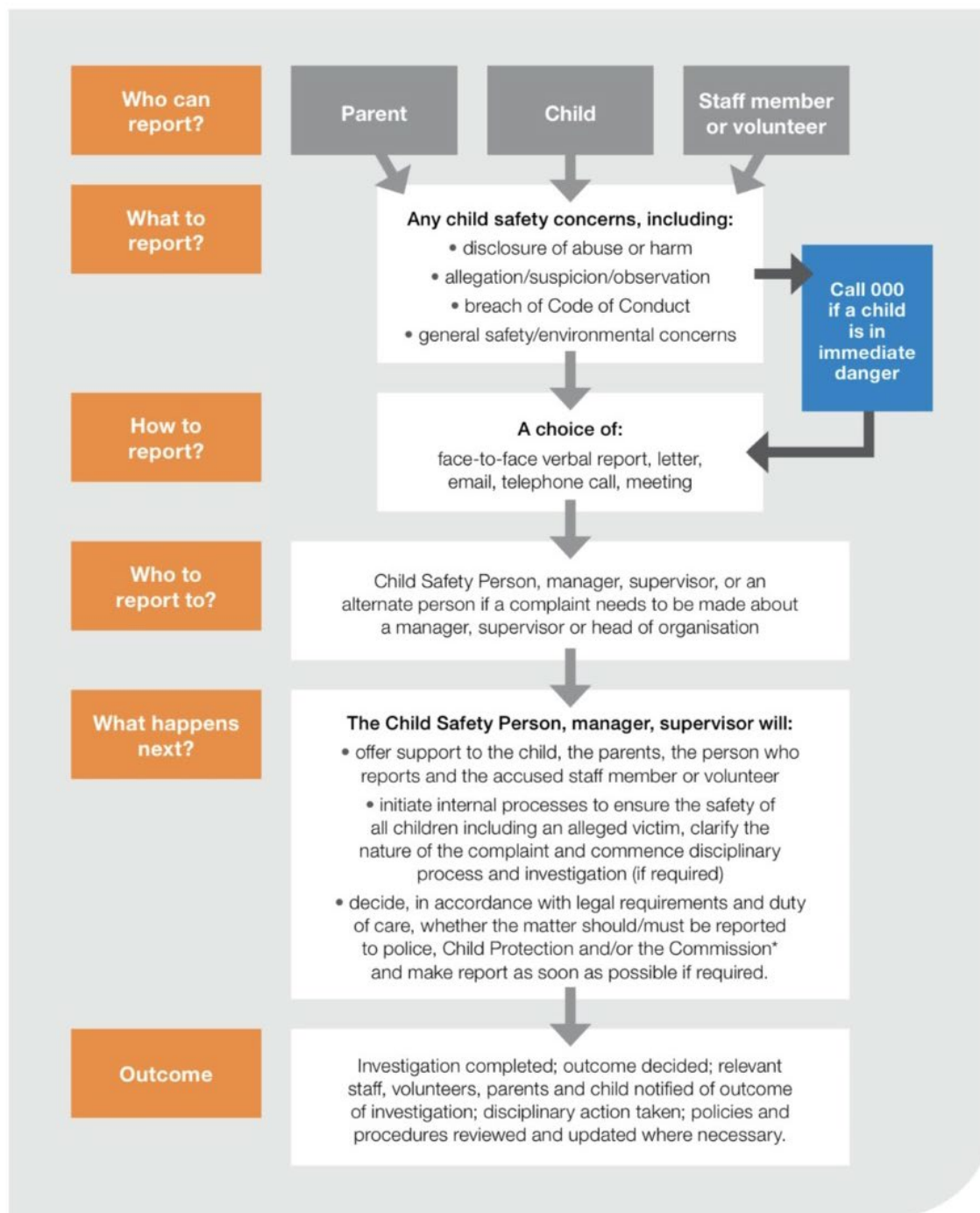
Some key risks to children in organisational settings are outlined below:

Risks to children	
Unintentional/accidental harm <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor physical environment leading to injury• Poor supervision• High-risk activity• Lack of risk mitigation strategies in place	Physical abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical punishment• Pushing, shoving• Punching, slapping, biting, kicking
Psychological abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bullying• Threatening language• Shaming• Intentional ignoring and isolating (either face-to-face, online or via other technology)	Cultural abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of cultural respect• Racial or cultural vilification or discrimination• Lack of support to enable a child to be aware of and express their cultural identity
Neglect <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of supervision• Not providing adequate nourishment• Not providing adequate clothing or shelter• Not meeting the specific physical or cognitive needs of children	Sexual abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual abuse, assault and exploitation• Grooming• Inappropriate touching• Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature (either face-to-face, online or via other technology)• Crossing professional boundaries

Adapted from the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au

Child Safety Reporting Process

This chart outlines the process for reports to be made by parents, children, staff members and volunteers alike.



* Applies only to organisations covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Refer to the Commission's website for details.

Changes to the Child Safe Standards from 1 July 2022

The Victorian Government has announced that the new Standards will commence on 1 July 2022. The eleven new Standards will replace Victoria's current [seven standards and principles](#).

Key changes include new requirements:

- to involve families and communities in organisations' efforts to keep children and young people safe
- for a greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people
- to manage the risk of child abuse in online environments
- for greater clarity on the governance, systems and processes to keep children and young people safe.

Changes have been made to support greater national consistency, reflecting the *National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation* developed following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

What are the new Child Safe Standards from 1 July 2022

Child Safe Standard 1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
Child Safe Standard 2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
Child Safe Standard 3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Child Safe Standard 4	Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
Child Safe Standard 5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
Child Safe Standard 6	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
Child Safe Standard 7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
Child Safe Standard 8	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
Child Safe Standard 9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
Child Safe Standard 10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed
Child Safe Standard 11	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

For more information visit: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/news/new-child-safe-standards-start-in-victoria-on-1-july-2022-to-better-protect-children/>

Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisation's responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their employees and volunteers. The Approved Provider must notify the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) about any allegations of misconduct involving a child. Reportable conduct applies to all employees, volunteers, students (over the age of 18) and contractors.

The Approved Provider is obligated to implement the requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme which include:

- ensuring our FDC Service has systems in place to prevent reportable conduct from being committed by a staff member or volunteer within the course of their employment
- enable any person to notify the Approved Provider of a reportable allegation
- respond to a reportable allegation made against a worker or volunteer from our FDC Service, by ensuring that allegations are appropriately investigated
- report allegations which may involve criminal conduct to the police
- notify the Commission for Children and Young People within 3 business days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation Notification can be made via CCYP website: [CCYP | Report a concern or allegation](#)
- investigate an allegation (subject to police clearance on criminal matters or matters involving family violence)
- advise the Commission who is undertaking the investigation
- manage risks to children
- provide the Commission with detailed information about the reportable allegation and any action that has taken place within 30 calendar days
- notify the Commission of the investigation findings and any disciplinary action the head of entity has taken (or the reasons no action was taken).

What is a reportable conduct?

There are five types of 'reportable conduct' listed in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

- sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of a child)
- sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of a child)
- physical violence (against, with or in the presence of a child)
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm

- significant neglect

A reportable allegation is made where a person makes an allegation, based on a *reasonable belief* that an employee, volunteer or contractor has committed reportable conduct or misconduct that may involve reportable conduct.

A person is likely to have a reasonable belief if they:

- observed the conduct themselves
- heard directly from a child that the conduct occurred or
- received information from another credible source (including another witness).

(Commission for Children and Young People)

For more information head to: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/>

Awareness of child protection law and steps for reporting

All FDC educators, staff and volunteers are committed to identifying possible risk and significant risk of harm to children and young people at the Service. We comprehend our duty of care and responsibilities to protect children from all types of abuse and neglect.

All staff are required to sign a Staff/Educator Code of Conduct in relation to observing child safe principles and presenting appropriate behaviour in the presence of children.

Staff, educators and educator assistants will undertake an approved child protection training at least every 12-18 months.

Our service ensures all employees, and volunteers recruited or engaged display the right personal qualities, skills and experience to provide high quality supervision and care to children in addition to holding a validated Working with Children Check (WWCC)

Victoria Police will be contacted if a child is at risk of serious harm.

Child Protection is contacted as soon as practicable of any incident reasonably believed that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the service or otherwise.

Child Protection is notified as soon as practicable of any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the service or otherwise.

If a staff member or educator has general concerns for the wellbeing of the child or family, but has assessed that the child is not at immediate risk of harm, a referral to Child FIRST should be made in support of the child or family, after seeking consent from the family.

In order to make an informed assessment of concerns, Child Protection or Child FIRST may need to discuss the matter directly with the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.

Furthermore, educators are provided with a step-by-step guide to making a report to Child protection or Child First as a reference.

To view the step-by-step guide, go to;

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/parents/health/mandreportsep10.pdf>

Staffing

Right Choice Family Day care is committed to supporting educators and staff in carrying out their duties and in assisting them to achieve their ambitions within the service. This service believes in building a cohesive team of management, staff and educators and in ensuring that all are provided with adequate training and knowledge to enable them to carry out their role.

Right Choice FDC adheres to the Education and Care Service National Regulations we engage Family Day Care (FDC) educators, educator assistants, coordinators and staff who are suitably qualified and adhere to regulated educator to child ratios. We ensure that all our educators engaged by the FDC service are assessed and their residence/venue is assessed at least annually to ensure they are able to provide a high standard of care and education. Our service engages and employs staff to support educators with the delivery of high-quality education and care for children.

Engagement of fit and proper staff

The service shall require that all persons employed (whether for gain or as volunteers) are fit and proper to undertake the work for which they are engaged. If at any time they cease to be a fit and proper person their employment within the service will cease immediately.

A person is considered fit and proper if, they:

- are capable of providing a standard of work consistent with their role and the quality standards expected in the service
- have obtained and provided a current Working With Children Card.
- have obtained and provided a clear National Police Check.

The following measures are in place to ensure staff and educators remain fit and proper:

- Regular verification of Working with Children Check card numbers for all staff and educators, educator assistants and 18+ household members through Service Victoria.
- Regular audits to track and document educators' children who are approaching 18 years of age.
- Home visits and ongoing conversations with educators about their home environment and household members.
- Regular training on child safe standards, child protection and correct practice for dealing with difficult children.
- Sharing of service policies, factsheets from Acecqa and other information from reputable organisations.

Recruitment Process

As per industry requirements, the minimum criteria for the acceptance of an application:

- Must be minimum 18 years of age
- A current and valid working with children check (WWCC – Employee status)
- A recent Criminal History Check (issued the last 6 months)
- Must have a Certificate III in Children's Services or above
- Current Approved First Aid training (To check if any of your qualifications are approved go to: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Qualifications.aspx>)
- Current CPR
- Current Anaphylaxis training
- Current Asthma management training
- Completion approved child protection course
- Completion of approved food safety course
- Public Liability Insurance or willingness to obtain prior to commencement of care. Insurance must reflect minimum cover of \$10 million.
- A current and valid working with children check (WWCC) and Criminal History Check for anyone aged 18 years or over who lives in your home
- An understanding of children's development and how to care for them in a safe way that complies with all Right Choice Family Day Care policies and procedures and Child Safe Standards
- Additional professional development as required by our service (Infection control, Hand hygiene, Sleep safety, Child safe standards, Inclusive practice etc)

A vacancy may be advertised for positions online. An enquiry is received from a prospective educator. Alternatively, prospective educators could call for vacancies within the service or contact us via word of mouth.

1. Informal phone conversation for introductory purposes. An application form, Health declaration and a Compliance history statement form will be provided, and will need to be returned to the office with minimum requirement document attached. Short listed candidates will be contacted (applies to advertised positions). An opportunity may arise where the educator would be visited at their home initially. This would also be suitable for an applicant who is new to the industry and would like their home assessed early on.
2. The applicant will be contacted and an interview time arranged. Interviews can be held face to face as well as via Zoom. Applicant's qualifications, knowledge, experience in childcare, knowledge on child safety standards, child protection, awareness of and sensitivity towards the diverse needs of young children and their families will be assessed. An opportunity is given to the applicant to provide information on any previous non-compliance or disciplinary action.
3. A home safety check is conducted at the prospective educators home. A full assessment of the areas in the home that would be accessible to children, this includes outdoor areas and back yard. Any safety points will be discussed, and issues requiring rectification will be provided to the prospective educator. All items on the list will need to be addressed before progressing further.
4. Two referees from the educators application form will be contacted. Referees would need to be someone who has knowledge of the educators prior work experience preferably. A family member does not qualify as a referee.
5. A background check is completed to ensure the person is fit and proper and would fit into our service culture. Criminal history check is reviewed, working with children card status checked via Dept of Justice website. If the applicant is an educator with previous experience, their information is checked against the 'Registers' in the NQIATS portal.
6. Outcome of interview and background check will be discussed between the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor. If the applicant is found to be suitable for role, their application will be accepted.
7. Face to face meeting is held for final discussions and initial induction. Discussion would include, policies and procedures, compliance within our national law and regulations, completion of forms and introduction to online attendance records. Service expectation would be made very clear with an opportunity for the educator to ask any questions or seek clarification. A service agreement, code of conduct and job description would be discussed and then signed by the prospective educator/staff member and the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor. A compliance history statement will also be signed if not completed earlier.

Code of conduct

We believe in forming an inclusive and welcoming environment and workplace by providing experiences that motivate and facilitate personal growth and development of our educators, educator assistants and coordinators. The values that underpin our work ethic includes equality, respect, integrity and responsibility. Our FDC Service is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes the safety of all children and embeds the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#).

All staff and volunteers are responsible for promoting a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging. We recognise the importance of and responsibility for, ensuring our Service provides a safe and supportive environment which respects and fosters the rights and wellbeing of children in our care. We are dedicated in promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

All members of the service are expected to present themselves in an ethical, respectful, and responsible manner, while maintaining confidentiality at all times. Interactions between educators, coordination unit staff, children, and families must reflect these standards.

All staff, including new educators are introduced to the service code of conduct at induction. All new applicants are required to understand and abide by the code of conduct. A copy of the signed code of conduct is provided to the new staff member and is available at the service or residence for families to view.

Our Staff/Educator Code of Conduct states:

All staff, educators, volunteers of Right Choice Family Day Care are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Right Choice Family Day Care are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to Right Choice Family Day Care **child safe policy** at all times / Right Choice Family Day Care **statement of commitment to child safety** at all time
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another

- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to Right Choice Family Day Care Director / leadership, and ensure any allegations are reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to Right Choice Family Day Care Director/ leadership
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Staff and volunteers must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our directors' knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate)
- have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to Right Choice Family Day Care Director / leadership.

Determining the responsible person present at the service

Our service will endeavour to have certified or nominated supervisor at the service office during working hours. Should the Nominated Supervisor be out of the office, he/she will be contactable via mobile phone at any time.

Furthermore, the contact details of the director and coordinator will be available to all educators should they wish to contact either person. The Approved Provider is available to educators during their working hours, including weekend and after hours for emergency purposes.

Participation of volunteers and students on practicum placements

This policy outlines a clear and understandable process for the inclusion of volunteers and students in the service, ensuring the safety and well-being of both the volunteers and the children in our care.

The family day care service can offer placements to:

1. High school students who wish to gain work experience as part of a high school program, where the school has initiated the work experience, identified the student's suitability, worked with the service to arrange suitable times and provide authorisation for the student to participate.
2. Students attending other registered training organisations and studying in a relevant field, such as childcare, teaching, recreation or community services where the training organisation has initiated the placement, identified the students suitability, worked with the nominated supervisor in relation to times and expectations and provided written authorisation for the student to participate.

The family day care service will:

1. Provide students and volunteers with guidelines identifying their responsibilities, expectations and code of conduct while at the family day care service during a work experience induction.
2. Check that all students and volunteers over the age of 18 years have a valid Working with Children Check and Criminal History Check prior to commencing at the family day care service.
3. Ensure students/volunteers are provided a copy of our Code of Conduct.
4. Ensure the student conducts themselves in a manner that is appropriate whilst around children.
5. Ensure students/volunteers are aware of child protection and privacy laws.
6. Give support and guidance to students and volunteers where possible.
7. Assist students and volunteers to belong as part of the team and feel welcome.
8. Encourage students and volunteers to participate and communicate in an open and honest manner.
9. Ensure that students and volunteers do not discuss children's development or other issues with parents.
10. Request that students and volunteers adhere to all areas of confidentiality.
11. Ensure students and volunteers are never left alone or in charge of any children.
12. Require students and volunteers to abide by *Education and Care Services National Regulations* while on placement.

13. Provide students and volunteers with access to family day care service policies and procedures.
14. Take all reasonable steps to ensure the written policies are followed.
15. Expect students and volunteers to take responsibility for the role that they are undertaking whilst on placement, viewing it as part of their own professional development.
16. Inform families when a student or volunteer is on placement at the service.
17. Provide ongoing constructive feedback and assessment that is fair and equitable.
18. Provide students and volunteers with opportunities to learn and participate in a positive, encouraging environment.
19. Maintain a record of all students and volunteers attending family day care service
20. Ensure all family day care educators maintain a record of any students or volunteers attending a family day care residence and/or venue.
21. Ensure the students or volunteer will abide by health and safety requirements.

Interactions with children

Right Choice Family Day Care recognises the basis upon which all interactions with children will occur and is also the foundation upon which all policies and procedures are developed. Children will be treated by educators and staff at all times as unique and valued individuals and with respect and dignity.

Learning opportunities shall be based on each child's abilities and interests and be provided for in a safe and friendly environment. This service also recognises that respect for children also extends to respecting their family and their cultural background and will ensure that all families and their preferences in relation to care, are treated respectfully and equitably.

In order to maintain positive interactions with children our service and educators will maintain the following:

- Our service will provide a relaxed and happy atmosphere for the children.
- Our educators will maintain the dignity and rights of each child at all times
- Our educators will encourage children to initiate conversations about their experiences inside and outside the service as well as what is happening around them, express their ideas and feelings, share humour with the coordinator and educators and seek assistance as they take on new challenges and try to do things for themselves.
- Our educators and coordinator will respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate and engage them in sustained conversations about their interests in a positive manner.

- Our educators will direct positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour
- Our educators will talk with children in a two-sided manner. That is, encourage children to have their own opinions, ideas and comments. Educators should support children with this and let them know that their ideas are valued.
- Our service will have in place predictable personal-care routines that are enjoyable experiences for babies and toddlers and will respond to babies and toddlers when they practice their verbal communication skills.
- Our routines, as well as planned and spontaneous experiences will be organised to maximise opportunity for meaningful conversations between children and educators and the service will ensure that all children have equal opportunity to engage in one to one and small group conversations with educators.
- Our educators will be knowledgeable in the communication strategies and non verbal cues of babies and toddlers and will support the development of trusting relationships between educators, babies and toddlers to allow them to feel secure in the service.
- Our policy on interactions with children will be visible in educator's homes
- Our educators will participate in children's play using children's cues to guide their level and type of involvement while always maintaining a positive approach when responding to children and offering assistance.
- Our service will ensure mealtimes are relaxed and unhurried and educators take the time to sit and talk with children.
- Our educators and coordinators will use information from their observations of interactions with children to extend the children's thinking and learning.
- Our educators will allow time to talk to parents about their children. This allows educators to gain insight into their home life.
- Our service will implement strategies to assist all children to develop a sense of belonging, confidence and self-reliance through positive interactions between the children and educators.
- Our service will gather information from families in order to be able to provide support for children during the settling in process.
- When children have special needs our service will consult with other professionals or support agencies that work with children to gather information that will guide our interactions with these children. This information will be recorded in the child's file.
- Our service and educators will give regard to the family and cultural values, age and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for by the service.

Relationships in groups

In order to encourage respectful and positive relationships between children and their peers and educators our service will adhere to the following practices:

- Our service will encourage children to participate in enjoyable interactions with their peers, respond positively to ideas, negotiate roles and relationships, contribute to shared play, and develop friendships.
- Our educators and their families will model strategies for children to initiate interactions and participate in group play and social activities and assist them when they have trouble understanding or communicating with each other.
- Our service will ensure that the children have many opportunities to learn about their responsibilities to other, connectedness and interdependence as learners, and the value of collaboration and teamwork.
- Our educators will promote a sense of community in the service.
- Our educators will support and promote children's interpersonal relationships and support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and capabilities in group play, projects and experiences.
- Our educators will learn about children's shared interests and will use this information to plan further experiences that provide collaborative learning opportunities.
- Our service will ensure that the program and routines of the service will include regular opportunities for children to engage in social play and group experiences.
- The educator's own children will be treated fairly and consistently.

Enrolment and placement of children

We believe the most successful placement of children in family day care are when there are a match between the needs of a child and the educators ability and willingness to meet the individual needs of the child. It is the role of the coordination unit to implement a system that allows for placement to occur quickly and in a fair and ethical manner. We will maintain and keep up to date a register of educators with current vacancies, as well as a register (waiting list) of parents seeking care for their children. Should a vacancy occur, the parents will be contacted from the waiting list and notified of this vacancy. All families are informed of the Priority of Access Guidelines at enrolment.

Priority of Access Guidelines

Children who are enrolled at the service or whose families are seeking a place at the service will be given Priority of Access in accordance with the guidelines that have been established by the Department of Education.

Below are the Priority of Access levels which the centre must follow when filling vacancies.

- **First Priority:** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- **Second Priority:** a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the '*A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*'
- **Third Priority:** any other child.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of \$43,727 for 2015-2016, or who or whose partner are on income support
- children in families from a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.

A child care service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority.

They can only do so if you:

- are notified when your child first entered care that your service follows this policy
- are given at least 14 days notice of the need for your child to vacate.

Enrolling a new child & Orientation

When a family has indicated their interest in enrolling their child in our service, the following will occur:

- Coordination unit will meet with the family and discuss any matters that are of a sensitive nature, such as discussing a child's medical needs, court orders, parenting plans or parenting orders. This discussion will take place in private. We request that parents begin to fill out enrolment forms at that time, and discuss their child with us so we can accommodate their needs in the service from the first day they start with us. Should a child use English as a second language, or speak another language at home, we request that families provide us with some key words in the languages the child speaks so that educators can learn the words.
- Should there be no current vacancies ask the family to keep their details on the waiting list for when a place becomes available in the future.

- Facilitate placements within the service by matching care requirements, such as age, number of children, hours of care, starting date and location with educator vacancies.
- Contact the educator and confirm vacancy
- Contact family with educators details and ask them to make contact at a time suitable to them.

If both parties are happy, a date(s) will be made to conduct orientation for the child. Orientation sessions will aid a successful transition for the child and assist him/her in settling in to their new environment with their new educator. The number of orientation sessions will depend on the family and the child.

Families also need to contact the Family Assistance Office to have their eligibility for Child Care Subsidy assessed.

Before the child begins their first day with us, the service must have all required documentation for the child. The child will not be accepted into the service without this being completed.

Furthermore, our service will try and accommodate families so that children from the same family can attend our service with the same educator.

Complying Written Arrangement

The agreement through which families can receive Child Care Subsidy is called a Complying Written Arrangement (CWA). A Complying Written Arrangement is an agreement to provide care in return for fees.

Complying Written Arrangement must include the following information:

- the names and contact details of the provider and the individual(s)
- the date the arrangement starts
- the name and date of birth of the child (or children)
- if care will be provided on a routine basis and if so
- details about the days on which sessions of care will usually occur
- the usual start and end times for these sessions of care
- whether care will be on a casual or flexible basis (in addition to, or instead of, a routine basis)
- details of fees charged under the arrangement (providers can reference a fee schedule or information available on their website), which the parties understand may vary from time to time. Additional information can be included to support the individual's understanding of their payment obligations

The initial CWA signed up enrolment will be included in the child enrolment form. Changes to care requirements such as change in booked hours, days or change in fees will require a new

CWA to be signed by the family each time there is a significant change. Your educator or coordination staff can provide a new CWA document when needed.

It is worth noting, there are other types of arrangement individuals can enter into with the service.

These are:

- Complying Written Arrangement (CWA)
- Relevant Arrangement (RA)
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)
- provider eligible arrangement arrangement with an organisation (third party)

For further information on this topic, visit:

[The enrolment process - Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government \(dese.gov.au\)](https://www.dese.gov.au/the-enrolment-process)

Changes to Family assistance law (Secondary school children)

On 27 February 2017, the Minister for Education and Training announced changes to the Family Assistance Law affecting Child Care Benefit approved Family Day Care services.

All approved Family Day Care services have had these changes apply from 13 March 2017.

Restrictions have been placed on child care fee assistance for Family Day Care provided to an individual who has turned 18. As well as, child care fee assistance for Family Day Care provided to a child aged 14 years or older, or who attends secondary school, unless a specified circumstance applies. For more information regarding the special circumstances visit:

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L00166>

From 2nd July 2018, any child attending secondary school who is 13 or under, may be eligible for CCS in limited circumstances. Children between the ages of 14 to 18 may be eligible if they have a disability.

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy/who-can-get-it>

Inclusion Support Program

The ISP will assist early childhood and childcare services to include children with additional needs by providing tailored inclusion advice and support from contracted inclusion specialists, as well as funding to support more challenging inclusion barriers.

ISP consists of three key elements:

- **Inclusion Agencies**

Each state and territory has an Inclusion Agency (IA) contracted to assist eligible services to build their capacity and capability to provide and embed inclusive practice in their delivery of early learning programmes.

- **Inclusion Development Fund**

The Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) and Specialist Equipment Library provide extra support to eligible services to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be addressed by the support of an inclusion agency.

- **The Inclusion Development Fund Manager**

Assess the applications and ensure eligible services have equal access to the fund.

Inclusion Agency for Victoria

Community Child Care

<https://www.viac.com.au/>

via@cccinc.org.au

1800 177 017

Other links:

KU Children's Services - www.ku.com.au

IDFM - <http://www.idfm.org.au/home>

Include Me: <http://bigfatmile.com.au/include-me/>

No Jab No Play

From January 1 2016, the new legislation known as **No Jab No Play** has come into effect. Children enrolling in early childhood education and care are now required to be up to date with their immunisations or have an approved exemption. As per the new law, children with overseas immunisation records will not be accepted. Any overseas record must be assessed by a GP and immunisation needs addressed.

Parent must provide an *ACIR Immunisation History Statement* to be enrolled in a service. Parents can access this statement by contacting Medicare or logging on to the Medicare website.

For more information on **No Jab No Play** go to:

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play>

On 28 February 2018, the ‘No Jab, No Play’ legislation was amended so that an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) is the only form of documentation accepted for the purpose of enrolling in an early childhood education and care service. Previous forms of documentation, for example a letter from a GP or local council, are no longer accepted.

Note: Families will need to provide regular statements of childrens immunisation status to Right Choice FDC.

Termination of Care

Should you wish to end your child’s place at the service or should management make the decision to terminate your child’s place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending/terminating party. If this does not occur, 2 weeks fees will be billed to you.

Infection control

Minimising the transmission of contagious illness

Risk management

Right Choice FDC has effective and systematic risk management planning to identify any possible risks and hazards to our learning environment and practices related to colds, flu and other infectious diseases. Where possible, we have minimised these risks as is reasonably practicable.

Risk mitigation measures in place such as:

- exclusion of unwell staff, children and visitors
- reducing mixing of children by separating or staggering mealtimes
- adequate space between activity stations
- enhanced personal hygiene for children, staff and parents
- full adherence to the NHMRC childcare cleaning guidelines and cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces at least twice daily, washing and laundering play items and toys

- excursions to local parks, public playgrounds temporarily on hold and
- recommending influenza vaccination for children, staff and parents.

Implement effective hygiene measures

Hand hygiene is a general term that refers to any action that cleans hands, such as washing hands with soap and water then drying hands or using hand sanitiser. Handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds whenever you cough, sneeze or blow your nose, prepare food or eat, touch your face or use the toilet is advised.

Our service will adhere to government guidelines to ensure all educators, children, families and visitors to the service implement best practice.

Our Service will ensure:

- o all staff, parents, children and visitors have access to alcohol-based hand sanitiser provided upon arrival to the service
- o children and educators will regularly wash and dry their hands while in service.
- o educators will model correct hand washing procedures to children.
- o disposable tissues must be used to wipe noses, eyes or mouths and disposed of in the bin provided immediately after use, hands must be washed following the use of tissues
- o hands must be washed thoroughly using soap and water after using the toilet
- o cough and sneeze etiquette must be used- cover your cough and sneeze with your hand or elbow
- o children are supervised when washing hands
- o educators and staff must adhere to effective food preparation and food handling procedures
- o educators adhere to NMHRC childcare cleaning guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and equipment (such as toys, puzzles, outdoor toys, playdough etc). Refer to *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* recommendations
- o equipment, resources and surfaces including high-touch surfaces- taps, door handles, light switches, nappy change areas and toys will be cleaned frequently using appropriate cleaning spray or wipe.
- o washroom facilities have adequate supplies of soap, toilet paper and paper towel for drying hands

Cleaning and disinfection

The following should be used as a guide to manage the cleaning and disinfection process.

Clean and disinfect all areas (for example, toy rooms, bathrooms and common areas) that are used for day care. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation and then commence cleaning and disinfection.

Other items to be cleaned and disinfected are but not limited to:

- Hard toys (Puzzles, blocks, cars etc)
- Soft toys (Teddys, cushions etc)
- Ipad/Iphone
- Computers/laptops/Keyboard/Mouse
- Tv remote
- All hard surfaced (Benchtops/tables/desks etc)
- Shared pens, pencils, markers
- Outdoor play equipment

How to clean and disinfect

1. Wear gloves when cleaning and disinfecting if required. Gloves should be discarded after each clean. If it is a general clean you can use reusable gloves. Wash reusable gloves with soap and water after use and leave to dry.
2. Thoroughly clean surfaces using detergent (soap) and water.
3. Apply disinfectant to surfaces using disposable paper towel or a disposable cloth. Do not use re-usable cloths, when cleaning after exposure to contagious illness in care.
4. Ensure surfaces remain wet with disinfectant for the period of time required to kill the virus (contact time) as specified by the manufacturer. If no time is specified, leave for 10 minutes.

A one-step detergent/disinfectant product may be used as long as the manufacturer's instructions are followed regarding dilution, use and contact times for disinfection (that is, how long the product must remain on the surface to ensure disinfection takes place).

Cleaning and disinfection of items that cannot withstand bleach

Soft furnishings or fabric covered items (for example, fabric covered chairs or car seats) that cannot withstand the use of bleach or other disinfectants or be washed in a washing machine, should be cleaned with warm water and detergent to remove any soil or dirt then steam cleaned. Use steam cleaners that release steam under pressure to ensure appropriate disinfection.

Wearing masks

The advice of the government around wearing mask may be varied from time to time. For current advice go to: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/face-masks-vic-covid-19>

Face coverings in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services

In ECEC services, including kindergartens:

- it is not mandatory for teachers and educators to wear a face covering while working with children, but those who wish to do so can
- educators are required to wear a mask if they are working with an educator assistant who is not a member of their household.
- both educator and coordination team members will be required to wear a mask during visits.
- educators are to wear a mask if leaving their home to pick up or drop off children.
- educators should wear a mask when parent pick up or drop off their children.
- parents are required to wear face coverings at drop-off and pick-up times
- children aged under 12 are not required to wear a face covering. Face coverings should never be placed on children aged under two due to choking and strangulation risks.
- A person who has a medical condition – including problems with their breathing, a serious skin condition on the face, a disability or a mental health condition – is not required to wear a mask or face covering.

Governance and management of the service

Governance is the process that directs and controls our Family Day Care Service, ensuring accountability, and supporting decision making. The Approved Provider, coordinator and educators of the service accept the legal responsibilities associated with establishing, administering, and maintaining the service.

All persons will comply with all policies and procedural requirements when engaging in activities relating to the operation of the family day care service and will conduct themselves in an ethical manner and abide by codes of conduct. All records will be maintained in a confidential and private manner.

1. All family day care service staff, family day care educators and family day care assistants will have discussed their legal and ethical obligations.

2. Our service maintains a policies and procedures, which is provided to staff and family day care educators, and is readily accessible to families.
3. Educators should have a working knowledge of policies and procedures within the file.
4. The family day care service will:
 - Provide all family day care staff, family day care educators, students and family day care assistants with a copy of the Code of Conduct.
 - Provide all family day care staff, family day care educators and family day care assistants with training at induction in relation to the Code of Conduct and their responsibility to inform the service if there is any change to background checks affecting their fit and proper requirements.
 - Ensure policies and practices are developed in line with current *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, *National Law* and the *National Quality Standards*.
 - Ensure changes to policies are explained to all family day care staff, family day care educators and family day care assistants.
 - Ensure if a change to a policy/procedure is made, then at least 14 days' notice to the parents of children enrolled at the family day care service must be given before implementing any change to a policy and/or procedure.

Approved Provider responsibilities

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring compliance by all FDC educators and educator assistants with the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations
- complying with Family Assistance Law
- appointing suitably qualified Coordinators and FDC educators in the service
- supporting the coordinators in their role, providing adequate resources to ensure effective administration of the Family Day Care service
- developing a clear and agreed philosophy which guides business decisions and the work of management, staff and engaged educators
- displaying the prescribed information as listed in Regulation 173 including the current rating levels for each quality area stated in the National Quality Standard
- ensuring background checks, including criminal history and Working with Children Checks/Clearance are completed for all staff, FDC educators and educator assistants and adults 18 years of age and over residing in the FDC residence.
- determining whether or not a person working in the service is a 'fit and proper person'

- provide information to the regulatory authority upon request in relation to being a 'fit and proper person'
- implementing a probation and induction orientation program to ensure employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities, understanding of the values and organisational culture of the Service, policies and procedures, child protection law and other legislation
- acting honestly and with due diligence
- ensuring that families of enrolled children have access to enter the premises (regulation 157)
- ensuring there is a sound foundation of policies and procedures that complies with all legislative and regulatory requirements, and that enables the daily operation of each Family Day Care Service to be in line with the Approved Provider's philosophy and goals
- maintaining up to date and current policies and procedures for compliance by all FDC educator
- ensuring FDC educator and educator assistant's qualification requirements are current
- ensuring FDC educators are monitored, supported and supervised in accordance to regulations
- implementing annual assessments of approved FDC residences and approved venues
- re-assessing a Family Day Care (FDC) residence following an educator's relocation or the completion of major renovation works
- ensuring that requirements relating to the physical environment, space, equipment and facilities are met
- ensuring a record is kept of all visitors to a FDC residence or approved venue
- ensuring all requirements relating to staff records are kept
- ensuring all FDC educator documents are provided to the approved provider when the educator ceases to be engaged or registered with the FDC service
- notifying families at least 14 days before changes to policy or procedures that:
 - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected
 - significantly impact the service's education and care of children, or
 - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.
- ensuring the education program is based on an approved learning framework (EYLF) and (MTOP) and contributes to each child's sense of identity and wellbeing
- confirming incident, injury, illness or trauma records are stored in a kept in a safe and secure place until the child is 25 years of age. In the event of a death of child

while being cared for by the service or may have occurred as a result of an incident, the records must be kept until 7 years after the death.

- appointing staff and monitoring their performance
- ensuring all educators and staff have a clear understanding of the hierarchy of management
- providing clear and direct feedback and instruction that is suitable and appropriate to the task
- ensuring FDC educators keep evidence of current public liability insurance at the FDC residence or venue
- ensuring the FDC service remains financially viable and can meet its debts and other obligations as they fall due
- managing control and accountability systems
- reviewing the FDC Service's budget and monitoring financial performance and management to ensure the service is always solvent and has sound financial strength
- approving annual financial statements and providing required reports to government bodies and maintaining appropriate delegations and internal controls
- complying with funding agreements where appropriate
- reviewing the work process regularly
- supporting and assisting Coordinators and FDC educators in contributing to the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for the service and updating it at least annually.
- developing coherent aims and goals that reflect the interests, values and beliefs of all stakeholders of the Service
- establishing clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all FDC personnel
- evaluating and improving the performance of all FDC personnel
- Regularly reflecting on service practices, with nominated supervisors and FDC staff to identify and implement improvements in workflow.

Termination of employment

Any staff member (employee or contractor) wanting to terminate their employment or association with the service, is required to provide 14 days written notice to the Director. All materials and equipment belonging to Right Choice Family Day Care must be returned in a timely manner. Any passwords to computer systems will be changed and access to the service files removed. All office keys and security passes will need to be returned by the last day of work. Failure to return items will incur a fee of \$200 which will be used to cover the cost of replacing the key and pass.

Confidentiality

The FDC educator will maintain the confidentiality and privacy of each child in their care and their family and shall not disclose any information to a third party other than the Family Day Care Approved Provider or Coordinator, or as legally required to do so to comply with Child Information Sharing Scheme or Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme.

- Confidential conversations will be conducted in a quiet area away from other children, parents. Such conversations in relation to the health and wellbeing of the child will be documented and filed in a confidential manner.
- Reports, notes and observations in relation to FDC educators, other service staff and children must be objective, accurate and free from bias and negative comments including use of labels.
- Students, volunteers and/or visitors to the FDC educator's residence and/or venue will ensure that information in regard to FDC educators, FDC service staff, children and families is not discussed outside of the context in which it was heard.
- Any information received or transmitted via mobile telephone (including text/SMS) or any other electronic device (e.g. email) shall be treated with the same confidentiality as any other written form of communication and must be stored confidentially.
- Service records related to enrolment records, medical management plans, court orders, educator and staff records and other sensitive information are kept in an appropriate lockable filing cupboard within the service office. Filing cupboards are accessible only to coordination staff. The service office is set in a secure location and accessible to staff with a key and security pass. Our office building is automatically inaccessible to others outside working hours and weekend. There is no night cleaning staff that access our office suite.
- Sensitive information is disposed of appropriately by shredding.
- All lap tops and computers have up to date anti-virus software and scans are regularly completed on these devices.

Records management

Our service will ensure it maintains records appropriately in line with our regulatory requirements. Records will be kept confidential at all times. Information that is deemed sensitive will not be divulged to persons who are not required to view such records.

Records to be reserved in relation to educators

A register of family day care educators will be kept by Right Choice FDC in relation to its educators. These records show:

- The full name, address and date of birth.

- The contact details of the educator
- The address of the education and care service including whether it is a residence or venue
- The date the educator was engaged by or registered with the service
- The date the educator ceased to be engaged by or registered with the service. This must be retained for 3 years from this date.
- The days and hours that the educator will usually be providing education and care to children.
- If the educator is an approved provider, the provider number and date of the approval
- If the educator is a certified supervisor, the number of the supervisor certificate and the approval date
- Evidence of any relevant qualifications held by the educator.
- If applicable, evidence that the educator is actively working towards that qualification. If this is the case, the following must be recorded:
 - Proof of enrolment.
 - Documentary evidence that the educator has commenced the course, is making satisfactory progress towards the completion of the course, is meeting the requirements of maintaining the enrolment.
 - For educators who are working towards the completion of a Diploma level education and care qualification, proof that they hold an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification or has completed the units of study in an approved Certificate III level education and care qualification determined by ACECQA.
 - Evidence that the educator has completed current first aid training, current approved anaphylaxis training and current approved emergency asthma management training. A copy of CPR update if applicable.
 - Evidence of any other training and professional development.
- For each child the educator cares for, the name, date of birth and days and hours of care
- The names and dates of birth of everyone who normally resides at the residence, including children who are under 18 years old.
- The identifying number and if applicable expiry date of a current working with Children check, current criminal history check less than 6 months old when sighted or a current teacher registration and the date these were sighted.

Records of Staff, Family Day Care Coordinators and Educator Assistants

Right Choice FDC will ensure a record is kept of staff, family day care coordinators and educator assistants that includes:

- The name of the person currently designated as the educational leader at the service.
This is a suitably qualified and experienced educator, co-ordinator or other person who leads the development and implementation of educational programs in the service.
- For nominated supervisors and other staff members: The full name, address and date of birth of any nominated supervisors and each other staff members of the service.
- Evidence of any relevant qualifications.
- If applicable, evidence that the staff member is actively working towards that qualification. If this is the case, the following may be recorded:
 - Proof of enrolment.
 - Documentary evidence that the staff member has commenced the course, is making satisfactory progress towards the completion of the course, is meeting the requirements of maintaining the enrolment.
 - Evidence of any approved training (including first aid training) completed by the staff member.
 - A Working with Children Check with a record of the identifying number.

For Students and Volunteers

Our service will ensure a record of the following is kept regarding students and volunteers:

- The full name, address and date of birth of each student or volunteer.
- The approved provider must also keep a record for each proposed day on which the student or volunteer participates in the service (or educators homes), the date and hours of participation.

For family day care educator assistants

Our service will ensure a record of the following is kept regarding family day care assistants:

- The full name, address and date of birth
- Contact details
- Name of family day care educator to be assisted
- Date the educator assistant was approved by the service
- The date the educator ceased to be engaged by or registered with the service. This must be retained for 3 years from this date.
- Evidence that the educator assistant has completed current approved first aid qualifications
- The identifying number and expiry date of a current Working with Children Check.

For visitors who attend the service while children are being educated and cared for

- The full name, signature, reason for visiting, time of arrival and departure. This document is to be kept at the educators home.

Records relating to enrolled children

Our service will ensure the following records are kept in relation to enrolled children:

- Documentation relating to child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the education program
- Assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the education program.
- Assessments of the child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program.

An **Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record**, including (copy to be given to service):

Details of any **incident** in relation to a child or injury receive by a child or trauma to which a child has been subject while being educated and care for by the service.

This record will show:

- The name and age of the child
- The circumstances leading to the incident, injury or trauma
- The time and date the incident occurred, the injury that was received or the child was subjected to the trauma.

Details of any **illness** which becomes apparent while the child is being educated and care for by the service. This record will show:

- The name and age of the child.
- The relevant circumstances surrounding the child becoming ill and any apparent symptoms.
- The time and date of the apparent onset of the illness.

Details of the **action** taken by the service in relation to any incident, injury, trauma or illness which a child has suffered while being educated and cared for by the service. This record will show:

- Any medication administered or first aid provided.
- Any medical personnel contacted.
- Details of any person who witness the incident, injury or trauma
- The name of any person who the education and care service notified or attempted to notify of any incident, injury trauma or illness a child has suffered at the service and the time and date of the notification and notification attempts.

- The name and signature of the person making an entry in the record and the time and date that the entry was made.
- This record must be recorded as soon as is practicable, but not later than 24 hours after the incident, injury, trauma or onset of illness occurred.

Records to be kept by both the educator and the service

- A **record of attendance** for enrolled children, showing the date, full name of each child attending the service, arrival and departure times and signature/initial of the person who delivers and collects the child.
- A child's **enrolment record**. As per regulation 160 this enrolment record would show:
 - The full name, date of birth and address of the child.
 - The name, address and contact details of:
 - Each known parent of the child
 - Any person who is to be notified of any emergency involving the child if any parent of the child cannot be immediately
 - Any person who is an authorised nominee
 - Any person who is authorised to consent to medical treatment of, or to authorise administration of medication to the child.
 - Any person who is authorised to authorise an educator to take the child outside the education and care service premises.
 - Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans provided to the approved provider relating to powers, duties, responsibilities or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child.
 - Details of any other court orders provided to the approved provider relating to the child's residence or the child's contact with a parent or other person.
 - Gender of the child
 - Language used in the child's home
 - Cultural background of the child and parents (if applicable)
 - Any special considerations for the child (e.g. cultural, religious, dietary requirements or additional needs)
 - Authorisations signed by a parent or a person named in the enrolment record as authorised to consent to the medical treatment of the child for educators to seek:
 - Medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service.
 - Transportation of the child by any ambulance service.
 - Authorisation to take the child on regular outings.
 - The name, address and telephone number or the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service.

- The child's Medicare number if available.
- Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child including any medication conditions or allergies including whether the child has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis, including details of any medical management plan.
- Details of any dietary restrictions for the child
- The immunisation status of the child
- If applicable, a notation that states that a staff member or approved provider has sighted a child's health record, if not attached.

The approved provider must ensure that the documents referred to above in relation to a child enrolled at the service are made available to a parent of the child on request. In line with this, if a parent's access to the kind of information referred to in this documentation is limited by an order of a court, the approved provider must refer to the court order in relation to the release of information concerning the child to that parent.

Records to be kept by family day care educators

- child assessments or evaluations
- incident, injury, trauma and illness records
- medication records
- attendance records
- enrolment records
- record of visitors
- their current public liability insurance
- their qualifications and certificates (eg. First aid, anaphylaxis and asthma management training)

These documents will be made available to parents on request after taking into account the limitations of any court order. If an educator leaves the service, they must provide all records to the family day care coordinator.

Expectations of staff

The following is expected of staff engaged by the service:

- carry out their duties in an alert, safe, honest, diligent and competent manner
- treat educators, other employees, customers and members of the public with courtesy and respect
- use their authority in a fair and unbiased way and not take improper advantage of their position
- comply with lawful and safe work instructions and directions concerning the performance of their duties, including their written position description

- avoid behaviour or situations which may reflect badly on the service

General Obligations

You must avoid conduct that:

- Is detrimental to the pursuit of the charter of the service.
- Is improper or unethical.
- Is an abuse of power.
- Causes or involves intimidation, harassment or verbal abuse.
- Causes or involves discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to employment.

You must act lawfully, honestly and exercise diligence. You must treat others with respect at all times.

Fairness and Equity

You have an obligation to consider issues fairly and consistently. That being, you must take all relevant facts into consideration and you must not take irrelevant matters into consideration when making decisions.

Harassment and Discrimination

You must not harass or discriminate against others, or support those who do the same.

Our service is an Equal Opportunity Employer and recognises the vast skills and knowledge of individuals from all backgrounds.

Gifts or benefits

You must not:

- Accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount
- Seek or accept a bribe
- By virtue of your position acquire personal profit
- You must not accept gifts with a nominal value. Presents/Gifts made by children are acceptable.

Obligations of family day care coordinator and educators

The family day care coordinator is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the service.

Educators have an obligation to:

- Give their attention to business of the service while on duty.
- Ensure that their work is carried out efficiently, economically and effectively.
- Carry out lawful directions given by any person having authority. Educators must listen and take advice relating to their position from members of the coordination unit.
- Respect management and refrain from intimidation, verbal and physical abuse.
Aggressive and/or offensive behaviour from any educator or staff member will not be tolerated and may result in immediate termination.

Obligations during meetings

You must respect management, other educators, parents or visitors present during meetings. All members of the service are encouraged and expected to provide input into meetings. All staff should feel to share their ideas and thoughts. All staff will be respected regardless of their opinions and views.

Inappropriate interactions

The following interactions are inappropriate:

- Using service information for personal purpose or benefit.
- Disclosing any information discussed during a confidential meeting
- Using confidential information with the intention to improperly cause harm to another person.
- Using the service's computer resources to search for, download, access or communicate any material of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening or abusive nature.

You must:

- Protect confidential information
- Only access information needed for service business
- Not use confidential information for any non-official purpose
- Only release confidential information if you have authority to do so.
- Only use confidential information for the purpose it is intended.
- Only release other information in accordance with established Service policies and procedures and in compliance with relevant legislation.
- Be scrupulous in your use of service property and should not permit misuse by any other person or body.

Basic Principles

1. Be honest and open-minded in easy and difficult situations
2. Open and honest communication
3. Believe in the service, its philosophy and its vision

4. Consistency and reliability
5. Frequent and fair feedback
6. Integrity
7. Believe in talent, knowledge and experience of your team-members and employees
8. Commitment to all aspects of your role

Right Choice Family Day Care uses the ECA (Early Childhood Australia) Code of Ethics as a basis for the all the work we conduct.

In relation to children:

- act in the best interests of all children
- create and maintain safe, healthy, inclusive environments that support children's agency and enhance their learning
- value the relationship between children and their families
- ensure that children are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexuality, age, ability, economic status, family structure, lifestyle, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, or national origin
- always take into account their safety, privacy, levels of fatigue and interest
- respect children as capable learners by including their perspectives in teaching, learning and assessment
- safeguard the security of information and documentation about children, particularly when shared on digital platforms.

In relation to families:

- support families as children's first and most important teacher and respect their right to make decisions about their children
- listen to and learn with families and engage in shared decision making, planning and assessment practices in relation to children's learning, development and wellbeing
- develop respectful relationships based on open communication with the aim of encouraging families' engagement and to build a strong sense of belonging
- learn about, respect and respond to the uniqueness of each family, their circumstances, culture, family structure, customs, language, beliefs and kinship systems
- respect families' right to privacy and maintain confidentiality.

In relation to colleagues:

- encourage others to adopt and act in accordance with this Code, and take action in the presence of unethical behaviours

- build a spirit of collegiality and professionalism through collaborative relationships based on trust, respect and honesty
- acknowledge and support the diverse strengths and experiences of colleagues in order to build shared professional knowledge, understanding and skills
- use constructive processes to address differences of opinion in order to negotiate shared perspectives and actions participate in a 'lively culture of professional inquiry' to support continuous improvement

In relation to community and society:

- learn about local community contexts and aspirations in order to create responsive programs to enhance children's learning, development and wellbeing
- collaborate with people, services and agencies to develop shared understandings and actions that support children and families
- promote the value of children's contribution as citizens to the development of strong communities
- work to promote increased appreciation of the importance of childhood including how children learn and develop, in order to inform programs and systems of assessment that benefit children
- advocate for the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote the rights and best interests of children and families.

For the full ECA codes of ethics go to: http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ECA-COE-Brochure_2016.pdf

In addition to the ECA code of ethics, all staff and educators, as well as assistants are required to understand and implement **Staff/Educator Code of Conduct** that directly references the Child Safe laws introduced on January 1st 2016. All staff are required to read, understand and sign this code of conduct. A copy of this document is available for families to view at the principal office.

Update: The current code of conduct and service statement to child safe standard is under review ahead of the new Child Safe Standards starting on 1st of July 2022. A revised code of conduct may be developed ensuring it aligns with the new Child Safe Standards and Principles. A copy of the updated code of conduct would be provided to all staff and discussed at a team meeting scheduled for May 2022.

Educators travelling overseas/interstate

As part of ensuring compliance and transparency, educators who plan to travel overseas or interstate during the fortnight they have provided care to children are required to provide evidence of departure and arrival dates. Evidence can be provided via a booked ticket or itinerary showing the educators name and the required information. Evidence provided is confidential and will be stored in a secure manner. Educators are not permitted to work on the same day of departure and arrival.

Children travelling overseas/interstate

Parents must notify the service if their children will not be in care for an extended period of time, this includes holidays. Parents are required to notify in writing both their educator and service of any planned absence. The email must cover the child's departure and arrival dates if the holiday includes overseas/interstate travel.

Acceptance and refusal of authorisations

Our service will ensure that service staff, educators and families are informed of the appropriate authorisation for actions in relation to administration of medications, collection of children, excursion and providing access to personal records.

This service will:

1. Ensure documentation relating to authorisations contains:
 - a. the name of the child enrolled in the service
 - b. the date
 - c. signature of the child's parent/guardian, or nominated contact person who is on the enrolment form
2. Apply these authorisations to the collection of children, administration of medication, excursions/outings and access to records.
3. Keep these authorisations in the enrolment record.
4. Exercise the right of refusal if written or verbal authorisations do not comply.
5. Waive compliance where a child requires emergency medical treatment for conditions such as anaphylaxis or asthma. The service or educator can administer medication without authorisation in these cases, provided it is noted on medical plans and that parents/guardians be contacted as soon as practicable after the medication has been administered.

Payment of fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the service

Right Choice Family Day Care acknowledges approved educators operate in a self-employed contractual arrangement with our service and refer families to our fee schedule before enrolment. Approved educators set their days of operation and minimum hours for provision of education and care under.

Our FDC Service aims to ensure families understand the fee schedules and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to meet our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Child Care Subsidy legislative requirements. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately and our approved educators adhere to their responsibilities as '*fit and proper persons*' under Family Assistance Law. Our FDC Service and educators ensure the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

From 26th of June 2023 Right Choice FDC will no longer allow educators to collect gap fees on the service behalf. iPay via HubHello will be used to charge families their contribution through a direct debit system. Educators are still required to charge the same fee to all their registered families. Our service fees are set as a min-max range with a set admin levy. Please contact us for a copy of our recent fee schedule.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is available to all families who are Australian Residents. To find out their eligibility, families must contact the Family Assistance Office (Centrelink).

Child Care Subsidy can be only be received as reduction of fees through the service.

Should you wish to end your child's place at the service or should management make the decision to terminate your child's place, 2 weeks written notice is required from the ending/terminating party. If this does not occur, 2 weeks fees may be billed to you.

Should there be a change to our fees, 4 weeks notice in writing will be given to families.

A once-off registration fee of \$250 is applicable to all educators registering with the service. This is a once off fee that covers the costs of all the books, posters and other materials provided to you. (May be subject to change at discretion of Management).

Setting fees

Fees are set in consultation with educator and depending on their qualifications, location, resources/environment offered and experience. Fees will fit in with the service set fee schedule.

If a session of care falls on a public holiday where a child is already booked on that day, families will be charged gap fee as usual, as CCS will be paid for sessions that fall on public holidays.

Casual days may be offered subject to availability.

Payment of fees

- Families are required to pay fees using the iPay direct debit system. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account. This can be done via the HubHello parent portal.
- Fees and charges associated with iPay are outlined upon enrolment
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees
- Families will be issued with a Statement of Entitlement on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and Regulatory requirements
- The Statement of Entitlement will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts
- The Statement of Entitlement is generated using our HubHello Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation

Direct debit of gap fees will occur after a fortnight has been completed and processed by the service. Once family statements and invoices have been sent out, direct debit will occur at the end of the week. Families are reminded to ensure adequate funds are available in their bank so as to avoid any unnecessary fees due to reprocessing. A small charge of .75c will be charged to families using a bank account, per transaction. Families should refer to iPays fee schedule for a full list of associated fees.

Absences from FDC Service

- Families are requested to contact the FDC Service/ FDC educator if their child is unable to attend a particular session
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the Service if their child is unable to attend.
- Under the Child Care Subsidy families are allowed 42 absence days per child, per financial year.

- Allowable absences can be taken for any reason, including public holidays and when children are sick.
- In order to minimise debt risk to families, a child's absences from care should be within a 4 week period where a fee will be charged. If a child is planning to be away from care for more than 4 weeks, families are encouraged to end the enrolment.
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law
- Records and evidence will be kept by the Service for each additional absence, where required
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via [myGov](#).
- In a period of local emergency, such as bushfire or pandemic, and our Service is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families *may* be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation.
- In accordance with Family Assistance Law, educators cannot charge for, or record a session of care where provision of care is not available. Educators are not able to charge a different rate for the same type of care provision. Therefore, if the educator is unable to provide care due to illness or leave, they are unable to charge for that particular session of care.

Overdue fees

Families will need to discuss any hardship or difficulty they may face with paying their fees, should fees become overdue and no resolution is found, steps may be taken to collect fees via a debt collection agency as a last resort. If a family has not paid their fees for no legitimate reason or has not provided an appropriate method (bank account or credit card) of payment, access to care may be restricted or refused if non-payment of fee passes 4 weeks overdue.

Statement of accounts

The service will provide educators with an *Educators Statement* report each fortnight outlining the following details:

- Educators name
- The name of all children being cared for by the educator
- Child Care Subsidy Payment (if applicable)
- The amount owed by the families

Families will be provided with a statement of their account on a fortnightly basis. This statement will show the amount of CCS paid on their behalf, the service hourly levy and the gap fee due for payment to the service. Families will also be provided with an invoice showing the amount that would be charged for the fortnight completed.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- The family day care service and family day are educators will not collect sensitive information unless the individual has consented, or there is a legal requirement to do so or in other special circumstances that have a bearing on the wellbeing of the child.
- Every reasonable step will be taken to ensure personal information collected, used or disclosed is accurate, complete and current.
- Every reasonable step will be taken to ensure that personal information held within the family day care service is protected from misuse, loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.
- All personal information requested through Freedom of Information (FOI) will be managed by the approved provider.
- No educator may give information or evidence on matters relating to children and/or their families to anyone other than the responsible parent/guardian, unless prior written approval by the responsible parent/guardian is obtained. Exceptions may apply regarding information about children when subpoenaed to appear before a court of law. Reports, notes and observations about children must be accurate and free from biased comments and negative labelling of children.
- Personal information will only be collected in so far as it relates to the service's activities and functions, and in line with relevant legislation. (National Privacy Principle 1.1 - Privacy Act 1998.)
- Collection of personal information will be lawful, fair, reasonable and unobtrusive. (National Privacy Principle 1.2 - Privacy Act 1998.)
- The use or disclosure of personal information will only be for its original collected purpose, unless the individual consents to its use for other means (National Privacy Principle 2.1 – Privacy Act 1998).

Dealing with complaints

The service understands the grievances occur in all workplaces and handling them appropriately is important for maintaining a harmonious and productive work environment. The aim of these guidelines is to assist you to deal with grievances so that disputes or troubles do not escalate and to ensure fairness for all persons involved.

We aim to investigate all complaints and grievances with a high standard of equity and fairness. We will ensure that all persons making a complaint are guided by the following policy values:

- procedural fairness and natural justice
- code of ethics and conduct
- culture free from discrimination and harassment

- transparent policies and procedures
- opportunities for further investigation
- adhering to our FDC Service philosophy

Our service is committed to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and adopts a child safe approach to complaints involving a child or young person. As a child safe organisation, we will respond promptly and systematically to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions while fostering an environment where children feel confident that their safety and wellbeing are paramount.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The approved provider and educators will adhere to our *Privacy and Confidentiality* policy when dealing with grievances and complaints. However, if a grievance or complaint involves a staff member or child protection issues, a government agency may need to be informed.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/COORDINATOR/RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations are met
- ensure educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- ensure the name and telephone number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly visible at the FDC Service and each FDC residence or venue
- ensure information about our *Dealing with Complaints* policy is easily accessible to all families, children, staff, educators, visitors and volunteers
- treat all grievances and complaints seriously and as a priority
- ensure grievances and complaints remain confidential
- ensure grievances and complaints reflect procedural fairness and natural justice
- ensure people feel safe or comfortable when making a complaint, including children
- ensure educators, staff, volunteers and students are well informed about the different ways children may express concerns, distress and disclose harm as well as the process for responding to disclosures from children- including a complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting sexual behaviours that may be harmful to the child or another child.
(ACECQA, 2023)
- ensure our complaint handling processes are child-focused providing support and guidance for children to know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe
- conduct a review of policies and procedures, where required, following a complaint or grievance as part of our continuous improvement practices

- provide an induction program for new staff and educators that includes an overview of policies and procedures, including this *Dealing with Complaints Policy* and procedure
- ensure the approved provider is notified of all complaints and grievances
- discuss the issue with the complainant within 24 hours of receiving the verbal or written complaint
- investigate and document the grievance or complaint fairly and impartially
- provide details of an outcome following an investigation if required.

The investigation will consist of:

- reviewing the circumstances and facts of the complaint (or breach) and inviting all affected parties to provide information where appropriate and pertinent
- discussing the nature of the complaint (or breach) and giving the accused educator, staff member or volunteer an opportunity to respond
- permitting the accused person to have a support person present during the consultation such as a friend or family member.
- advise the complainant and all affected parties of the outcome within 10 working days of receiving the verbal or written complaint.
- monitor ongoing behaviour and provide support as required
- ensure the parties are protected from victimisation and bullying
- notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours if a complaint alleges the safety, health or wellbeing of a child is being compromised. Notification must include any incident where there is a reasonable belief that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service or any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring at the service.
- Educators who have a grievance should talk directly to the parents they have grievance with. Both parties should try to resolve the issue and develop solutions to ensure that the problem does not happen again. Privacy, confidentiality, respect and open-mindedness must be following during any discussion that will not take place in front of children.

FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS AND EDUCATOR ASSISTANTS WILL:

- ensure the name and contact number of the person to whom complaints can be made is clearly displayed at the FDC residence or approved venue
- report all complaints received to the nominated supervisors, and/or approved provider within required timeframes
- listen to the complainant's view of what has happened
- clarify and confirm the grievance or complaint, documenting all the facts prior to the investigation
- encourage and support the complainant to seek a balanced understanding of the issue

- maintain confidentiality at all times
- refer complainant's (as necessary) to FDC service policies that may assist in resolving the grievance or complaint
- be informed about the different ways children can express concerns or distress and disclose harm as well as the process for responding to disclosures from children- including a complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting sexual behaviours that may be harmful to the child or another child
- be aware of child protection law and their individual responsibilities as mandatory reporters/notifiers
- ensure children know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe and know the process that will happen to support them
- Include posters around the FDC area encouraging children's voice and their right to speak

Complaints involving allegations of child exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours

'Providers and educators play an important role in making informed professional judgements regarding sexualised behaviours involving children. Not all sexual behaviour involving children poses a risk to their safety.' (ACEQA, 2024).

The approved provider will ensure:

- FDC educators and other staff respond to any complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting sexual behaviours that may be harmful to the child or another child
- FDC educators and other staff assess the need for urgent police and emergency services assistance and inform the approved provider/nominated supervisor
- the regulatory authority is notified within 24 hours of any complaint alleging that a serious incident has occurred whilst a child is educated and cared for or complaints alleging that the Law has been contravened (S.174 (2)(b)).
- FDC educators and other staff are aware of the process for responding to disclosures from children as per our Child Protection Policy (Reg.84)
- FDC educators and other staff are aware of their duty of care and mandatory reporting obligations to make a report to Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and Justice (DCJ) Child Protection Crisis Line on 131 278
- FDC educators and other staff have a sound understanding of developmentally appropriate sexual development in children and sexual behaviour that may be concerning and requires a response

- FDC educators and other staff engage in professional learning to promote a consistent and appropriate approach to identifying and responding to sexual behaviours in children that may include:
 - age and developmental capacity of the child/children
 - reasons why a child may be behaving in sexually harmful ways
 - behavioural history of the child
 - how the behaviour impacts the behaviour of other children
 - risk the behaviour imposes on others
 - vulnerability of the child to be engaging in harmful sexual behaviour
- procedures for supporting all stakeholders during the complaint procedure are implemented including documenting discussions, ensuring confidentiality and providing information of the progress of the complaint and access to support agencies as required.
- The service will follow mandatory reporting obligations, notifying the appropriate child protection authorities and regulatory bodies as required by law.

Continuous improvement and evaluation

Complaints provide our service with opportunities for learning and improvement. We encourage regular and ongoing feedback from staff, children and families and the community. Our service is committed to resolving complaints through prompt investigation, open communication, and transparent processes. Our *Dealing with Complaints Policy* will be updated and reviewed annually in consultation with families, children, staff, educators and management.

To ensure complaints and grievances are handled appropriately, the approved provider/ nominated supervisor/ coordinator will:

- evaluate each individual complaint and grievance as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Management Register* to assess that a satisfactory resolution that has been achieved
- review complaints and grievances as recorded in the *Complaints and Grievance Management Register* to ensure a pattern of similar grievances is not occurring
- review the effectiveness of the FDC Service policy and procedures to ensure all complaints and grievances have been handled fairly and professionally.

- Consider feedback from staff, FDC educators and families, children and community regarding the policy and procedure.

Complaints can also be lodged with the DET, contact can be made at:

Department of Education and Training Victoria

Quality, Assessment and Regulation Division - Western Metropolitan Area

Phone: 7005 1801

Email: wmr.qar@education.vic.gov.au

Location: Level 9/1 McNab Avenue, Footscray, VIC, 3011